

**Walla Walla College Site Visit
School Social Worker Preparation Program
December 3-6, 2006**

STANDARD 1: PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD (PEAB)

Operating Procedures, Membership, Meeting Times

The School Social Worker PEAB has the required membership and meets four times per year. Over the last several years, the membership has included five to seven voting members. The PEAB reviews and submits an annual report. The PEAB has been using the OSPI PEAB handbook for operating procedures and should adopt their own by-laws.

Recommended rating: Met

Collaborative Function

The PEAB is highly involved in the School Social Work program. A significant portion of their work over the last two years has been related to the shift from initial to residency programs. The PEAB minutes and interviews indicate the PEAB was involved in ongoing discussion about the new standards and the preparation of the proposal to have the residency program approved. In addition, the PEAB has interviewed candidates, discussed the comprehensive exam, and sought ways to ensure candidates are supervised by certified school social workers. The candidate interviews prompted the PEAB to give specific feedback to improve the program. The members report the review of the program approval standards for residency programs led to several conversations about impact on student learning the school social workers role in supporting teachers and students. The PEAB has also discussed evidence-based programs and how to first ensure the program is aligned to standards and then how to assess candidates. These conversations led to the development of the portfolio for school social workers. According to interviews, PEAB members feel their time and contribution is sincerely appreciated and used.

Recommended rating: Met

STANDARD 2: ACCOUNTABILITY

Learner Expectations

Walla Walla College's School of Social Work program in School Social Work has been approved by the Professional Educator Standards Board. The Residency-Level Benchmarks for School Social Workers clearly documents a comprehensive set of learner outcomes tied to coursework and field work. Learner outcomes reflect the nine National Association of Social Work (NASW) standards and associated Washington State Learning Goals, Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs), Revised Code of Washington (RCWs), Washington Administrative Code (WACs), and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) standards in course syllabi, learning agreements, and assessment system implementation.

During Walla Walla College's last CSWE accreditation visit the team requested data documenting candidate performance verifying learner expectations during field practicum. During 2004 the unit studied the MSW learning agreements for candidates who had graduated from the program. The sample (n=15) revealed that candidates were missing between 1-3 objectives. Based on this assessment the unit concluded a discrepancy in the number of times candidates were being required to demonstrate objective competency. As a result, field experience agreements must now reflect standards and benchmarks each quarter.

Recommended rating: Met

The Assessment System

The unit has a comprehensive assessment plan that systematically produces data on applicant qualifications, candidate proficiencies, and graduate performances. Verification was established through interviews with the dean and college assessment director, and examination of the Assessment Plan Matrix 2003-2010. The plan (system) demonstrates how the unit systematically uses multiple internal and external assessments to evaluate program quality. The assessments include: a) Summer surveys and open ended questions that produce descriptive and qualitative data; Field-based learning agreements producing quantitative data; comprehensive exam measuring all program objectives; and Standardized Praxis II Social work Exam producing quantitative data. As mentioned previously during 2003-2004 pre/post tests were used to examine candidate achievement of program objectives, but has not been continued. Examination of summary tables and meeting minutes verified that the unit has used the assessment system to improve the program and unit operations.

Missing from the system were explicit linkages to the conceptual framework, evaluation of fairness, accuracy, and consistency of the assessments, and other than the use of "Survey Monkey" no other forms of technology are being used to maintain the system.

Recommended rating: Met

Use of Data for Program Improvement

Examination of the WWC Academic Program Assessment Reports, unit meeting minutes, and PEAB minutes verified that the unit analyzes its assessment data results to initiate changes in program operations. Pre and post test data demonstrated a deficiency in the evenness of candidate proficiencies resulting in new required learning agreements. Personal philosophy statements are required of each candidate. The PEAB has started to take a greater role by interviewing graduating candidates. Praxis II is now required prior to certification.

Recommended rating: Met

Positive Impact on Student Learning

Examination of the learning agreement results and raw data (learning agreement forms) indicated that candidates must demonstrate early identification and prevention of problems within a school setting, establish a plan for amelioration, and examine intervention effect. In addition candidates must evaluate and track student change and progress in meeting individual goals in social, emotional, behavioral, and adaptive functioning established by the practicing candidate.

Recommended rating: Met

STANDARD 3: UNIT GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES

Unit Leadership and Authority

At Walla Walla College, the Graduate Council oversees the School of Social Work Dean and the School of Education and Psychology Dean. The PEAB is the advisory body for the School of Social Work.

The Dean of the School of Social Work and the Director of the Master of Social Work programs are responsible for program administration. This includes curriculum, recruitment, advertisement, advisement, admissions, faculty development, fiscal responsibility and the graduation of students.

Recommended rating: Met

Qualified Faculty and Modeling Best Practices in Teaching

In the School of Social Work, nine faculty members have a doctoral degree and four faculty members have a master's degree. There are also several adjunct faculty members each quarter. Contract faculty members are licensed in the fields that they teach or supervise.

Faculty members use a variety of instructional strategies. Those listed in the syllabi include lectures, site visits, readings, discussions, research, clinical practice, process recordings, video demonstrations, portfolios and hands-on activities. Examples of technology integrated into the lessons include the reading of ejournals and Discussion Board assignments.

Diversity is integrated throughout the instructional program. One course, Cultural and Ethnic Perspectives, provides preparation for candidates to engage in cross-cultural and cross-ethnic social work practice. Themes of the course include discrimination, prejudice, oppression and racism identified within the world and life style of ethnic groups, the disabled, and gay and lesbian populations. Beyond that course, diversity is a theme in SOWK 530, 540, 541, 552 and 555. Courses SOWK 580, 556 and 540 include statements regarding students who need accommodations for physical or learning disabilities.

All interviews with faculty members and administrators reflected that they view the School of Social Work Program as excellent. Having a clinical focus allows candidates substantial time in the field. Program leadership is described as pioneering and visionary.

Recommended rating: Met

Modeling Best Practices in Scholarship

A review of the vitae shows that faculty members have all presented at numerous conferences and to numerous organizations. However, there has been a drastic decrease in the number of these presentations over the past several years. One notable exception to this decrease is a faculty member who has presented five times over the past three years.

Faculty vitae show that members have been published numerous times. There has been a notable decrease in publishing the past few years as well.

Recommended rating: Met

Modeling Best Practices in Service

Faculty members have a history of being active in community service organizations including giving presentations for these organizations, serving as PEAB members and serving as the sponsor of the Social Work Club. On campus, faculty members participate on the Graduate Council, Faculty Senate, Curriculum Committee, Academic Standards Committee, Distance Learning Committee and American Disabilities Committee. Faculty vitae show participation in a number of professional organizations such as the American Psychological Association, National Association for the Education of Young Children and National Council of Family Relations. One member founded a school for emotionally handicapped students in 1978 that is still open today. Another member was recognized as the Social Worker Educator of the Year in 2005 by the Blue Mountain Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

Recommended rating: Met

Experience working with Diverse Faculty

The Institutional Report states that faculty members represent Native American, African American, Cuban and Jewish backgrounds. However, there is no written diversity plan in place for the unit or institution.

Recommended rating: Unmet

Experience working with Diverse Candidates

There is no written plan in place for the recruitment of diverse candidates. An average of two students per year are approved for certification. This certification is seen as providing a service to those candidates interested in working in Washington state schools.

Recommended rating: Unmet

Experience Working with Diverse Students in P-12 Schools

Field experience placements in the Walla Walla School District reflect a student population of 29.8% Hispanic, 1.1% Native American, 1.3% African American, 1.9% Asian, and 65.8% Caucasian. Again, there is no written diversity plan in place for the unit or institution.

Recommended rating: Unmet

Collaboration

All School of Social Work faculty members are liaisons for students completing the field practicum. A minimum of two visits per quarter are expected.

Faculty vitae show strong participation in campus committees. These include the Nominating, Curriculum Development, Faculty Development, Computer Users and Social Work Field Committees. One faculty member is a member of the Northwest Field Coordinators' Consortium.

There is a functioning Social Work PEAB. A review of the agendas showed topics such as a report on the School Social Workers Conference and a presentation on how the work of intervention specialists and teachers intersect. Faculty PEAB members report that it is common to have a guest lecturer at a meeting.

Faculty interviews showed a close collaboration with Master of Social Work graduates in the region. For example, when the college set standards for the residency certificate they sought out and utilized input from this group.

Recommended rating: Met

Unit Budget

The Dean of the School of Social Work and faculty members stated that budget and amount of support staff are considered sufficient.

There have been efforts to increase faculty salaries in the past years to bring them in line with other colleges in the northwest. Contract teacher salaries are described as low, but improving. Three years ago a part-time staff member was added to focus on placement and credential analysis.

Full-time faculty and administration are eligible for fifty percent tuition remission for their family. This amount rises to seventy percent if room and board is needed.

Faculty members are reimbursed up to \$775 per year for attendance at conventions. They have the opportunity to attend a number of on-campus seminars, including technology-oriented sessions.

Recommended rating: Met

Personnel

Faculty loads generally do not exceed 12 credits per quarter. Full-time faculty members are also expected to serve as student advisors, field instructors and/or field liaisons for practicum students. One faculty member is given release time to oversee certification.

A sabbatical policy is in place allowing for a quarter-long sabbatical every twelve quarters. Up to two consecutive quarters can be accrued.

A required new faculty orientation is held each year. The orientation is one and a half days long and covers a wide variety of topics.

Recommended rating: Met

Unit Facilities

Current facilities consist of four houses located next to each other. Faculty members are growing increasingly anxious for a dedicated building to avoid the need to meet at various buildings on campus. There is some excitement related to a potential donation that has a fair chance of leading to a new building. The current estimated cost of this building is 3.3 million dollars.

Recommended rating: Unmet

Unit Resources Including Technology

Candidates are provided with a laptop computer. All dorm rooms have high speed internet access, with most of the campus having wireless internet access. The School of Social Work utilizes several Smart Classrooms on campus which include a projector, VCR, computer and internet capabilities.

Peterson Memorial Library includes full-text and abstract-only databases which are available to candidates both on and off campus. There are 167,535 book volumes and 2898 ebook volumes in library holdings. The library subscribes to databases relevant to social work such as PsycInfo, PsycArticles, Social Work Abstracts, ProQuest, SocINDEX, and IngenaConnect.

The Institutional Report indicates that faculty and candidates can receive computer support from the Distance Learning Department and Information Services.

Recommended rating: Met

Unit Evaluation of Professional Education Faculty Performance

Based on an interview with the Dean, faculty members are evaluated three times per year. Information located in the self study showed that tenure track faculty members are required to conduct candidate evaluations of at least three courses every year. Every three years a dossier must be developed that includes a resume of professional activities, evaluations from the program chair, peer evaluations from four colleagues, candidate evaluations from six courses and self-analysis of their teaching abilities and goals. Tenured faculty members follow this procedure every five years, with an interim evaluation at the mid-point. Contract faculty members are evaluated on every course.

Recommended rating: Met

STANDARD 4: PROGRAM DESIGN

The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the School of Social Work reflects the mission of Walla Walla College in the general sense of responding to the social, political, and economic needs of our society. The evidence submitted by the School did not include the actual wording of the College's mission statement but rather referred to the values underpinning both the College and the School of Social Work. The documentation provided by the School listed beliefs and objectives which guide the formation and development of the social work curriculum. The conceptual framework does not clearly articulate the theoretical research foundation for those beliefs. The School of Social Work is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, a national organization. The School enrolls an average of three students per academic year who become certified as school social workers in the State of Washington. The conceptual framework that guides the curriculum applies to all programs within the School, the school social work coursework forming a small part of the School.

Interviews with one graduate student pursuing her school certification and two faculty members from the School of Social Work indicated knowledge of the guiding beliefs. The graduate student understood the guiding beliefs from coursework and interaction with faculty. There is one additional course in the School of Social Work specifically designed for those candidates who are considering school social work. Examination of the MSW Practicum Learning Agreement indicated the internship reflects the beliefs and objectives that constitute the conceptual framework.

The assessment system employed by the School of Social Work is connected to the conceptual framework and national standards. The school social worker PEAB has some responsibility and input with regard to assessing school social worker candidates. The state standards are reflected in the pre- and post-test self-rating scale that a social worker candidate completes as part of the certification process. The use of technology to help the P-12 students was confined to email and the instructional use of videos/DVDs.

Recommended rating: Met

Recruitment, Admission, and Retention

The interview with School faculty revealed continuous effort to recruit candidates to complete the school social work program. Negative forces such as job availability and low salaries were named as reasons for the low enrollment and the lack of interest on the part of prospective candidates. The admission criteria for the School of Social Work and the program of school social work are clearly written in the college catalog and brochures. Decisions about candidate performance are based on coursework GPA, the school supervisor's assessment of performance in the field experience, and the Praxis test

for School Social Work. Documentation of under-represented groups was not presented, presumably due to the small number of actual candidates.

Recommended rating: Met

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Techniques and methods in school social work are taught in the larger context of social work in other employment settings. It appeared from the one interview with a graduate student that current theories and methods of social work were applicable in the school setting. Topics such as group facilitation, interview techniques, and counseling techniques were included in the courses offered in the school. The interview with two faculty members indicated that their few candidates were well-prepared with information about programs available for use in the school setting. Examination of the MSW field practicum learning agreement revealed programs and activities that were designed to provide the candidate with tools for working directly with children, educators, and families.

Recommended rating: Met

Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills

Based on a single interview, it appears that candidates are provided opportunities to learn and apply knowledge of social work methods in the school setting. There was a variety of evidence that the candidate considers the school, family, and community contexts when working with children. Specifically, the candidate was compiling a list of outside referral agencies, attending home visits, attending school conferences, observing in the classroom, and attending team meetings. All of these activities serve to add to the candidates' ability to consider the student's context. Another example of application of techniques and methods is the candidate's participation in coordinating small group programs aimed at self-esteem and safety. These professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills are aligned with the requirements for the residency certificate in the State of Washington.

Recommended rating: Met

Content Knowledge

Review of the College catalog and course syllabi indicated multiple courses available to provide candidates with content needed for the successful practice of school social work and the completion of an Educational Staff Associate (ESA) certificate in the area of social work. Knowledge of cognitive therapy, reality therapy, and play therapy were stated as necessary for the candidate. The field experience form specifies which standard

and objective is addressed in the internship. The candidate interview revealed an ability to explain important principles and concepts specific to the field. In addition, the candidate interviewed was familiar with the Essential Academic Learning Requirements and the Washington State Assessment of Learning.

Recommended rating: Met

Learner Expectations

The Residency-Level Benchmarks for School Social Workers clearly documents a comprehensive set of learner outcomes tied to coursework and field work. However, a set of clear program completion requirements was not found in the exhibits or in the institutional report. The candidate and faculty interviews revealed a verbal enumeration of program completion requirements, including the Praxis examination, but it was not clear if this was a complete list.

Recommended rating: Met

Field Experiences and Clinical Practices

The required field experience for certification is an internship in the school setting. The Council on Social Work Education requires a specified number of clock hours be spent in practicum or internship experiences. Interviews and examination of the field practicum learning agreement documented that the unit provides adequate opportunity for school social worker candidates to fulfill this requirement. The candidate interviewed stated the learning taking place during the field experience was invaluable and the school social worker supervisor was extremely helpful. The unit faculty indicated there are very few ESA certified school social workers employed in the local school districts, so finding a qualified, competent mentor was at times difficult. Documentation of joint decision-making between the unit and the school district with regard to practicum placements was provided. A written procedure for placing students in the Walla Walla school district was reviewed.

The internship experience runs for an academic school year. The candidate takes coursework during the internship. Exposure to students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds as well as students with disabilities is provided in the public school setting. It appeared from the interviews that the clinical practice is sufficiently extensive and intensive for the candidate to demonstrate the proficiencies required of a school social worker.

Recommended rating: Met

Endorsement Preparation

School social workers do not acquire an endorsement, but are certified in the area of school social work as an Educational Staff Associate. The evidence that the candidates were provided with coursework and field experiences appropriate for this specific certificate were found in the exhibits. As noted above, there is one school social worker class and the candidates are encouraged to take other specific courses to prepare them for their professional role in the schools. Candidates learn assessments particular to the field of social work. Progress notes are written for every contact with students. Evidence was lacking in the area of performance-based assessment and positive impact on student learning. Examples of positive impact were teacher report or student self-report of increasing or decreasing certain behaviors. Examples such as a decrease in discipline referrals, an increase in returned homework/test scores/class participation or increased attendance were not provided.

Recommended rating: Met

Entry and Exit Criteria

Entry and exit criteria for the internship exist and were found in part on the written process for placing students (candidates) in the school district. Exit criteria, including a self-rating scale post-test and successful completion of the internship, were mentioned in interviews with the candidate and the two faculty members. Evidence that these criteria were well-publicized in a handbook, brochure, or course syllabi was not found.

Recommended rating: Met

Collaboration with P-12 Schools

Interviews with the two faculty members who are primarily involved with the school social worker program indicated that they were active professionally in the local school district. Members of the PEAB also stated that there was good communication and collaboration between the School of Social Work and the local school district. The faculty provided explanations of current issues in the schools and was working to increase the number of school social worker positions in the local school district.

Recommended rating: Met

Regionally Accredited Degrees

The School of Social Work requires candidates admitted to the Master of Social Work program to have graduated with a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution. To be eligible for the Educational Staff Associate certificate, the candidate

must be awarded the Master of Social Work degree. All candidates who become ESA certified graduate from Walla Walla College which is regionally accredited.

Recommended rating: Met

STANDARD 5: KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Core Concepts and Professional Practice Foundations

The excellence of the Walla Walla College MSW program is well documented through accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in 2004. In the self-study completed by the School of Social Work and verified by the visiting review team, all aspects of the program were deemed to meet standards. Although school social work candidates are a small part of the entire graduate student population, they receive the benefit of the many general social work courses in which they gain core concepts, tools of inquiry, theories and skills. Additionally, they are required to take a course (SOWK 555) entitled School Social Work in which they learn to apply these concepts to the school environment specifically. Their practicum experience in a school setting for three quarters further develops these understandings. A course grid aligned to each Washington state standard and benchmark substantiates the coverage of the concepts. Faculty and student interviews verify the application in school settings, with particular focus on EALRs and GLEs. An MSW Field Practicum Learning Agreement is completed by each student, approved by the faculty liaison, and monitored by the field instructor. At the end of each quarter, the student provides work samples giving evidence of completion of the objectives and receives a rating on each objective from the faculty liaison. A new MSW Field Practicum Learning Agreement is then completed for the next quarter.

Recommended rating: Met

Planning, Ecological Assessment and Evaluation

The MSW program has a strong research component, with a number of required courses and practical application of individual, family and systems assessments in the practicum. In the MSW Field Practicum Learning Agreement, the candidate is required to establish student learning objectives and to identify “observable, measurable outcomes with target date” in their plan. The Learning Agreement may be modified during the quarter by the candidate and the field instructor in response to changing conditions in the school setting.

Recommended rating: Met

Prevention/Intervention Services

Faculty and Candidate interviews describe several kinds of prevention activities completed by the candidate during the practicum such as Second Steps and Peer Mediation training for students. An anti-bullying intervention activity was also described. Practicum students report providing case management services to identified students, including parent contacts and referrals to appropriate agencies. These activities were developed in collaboration with the field instructor based on particular school needs.

PEAB members referred to the importance of Prevention/Intervention activities by school social workers.

Recommended rating: Met

Home, School and Community Consultation and Collaboration

According to faculty and candidate interviews, practicum students are invited to participate in parent conferences and to attend other staffing meetings related to student concerns. During the practicum, candidates report researching available resources in order to provide families with appropriate referrals. Interactions with agencies and other school personnel are an essential part of providing services to students and families.

Recommended rating: Met

Advocacy and Facilitation

Candidates work during the practicum to become familiar with community resources and to establish relationships with personnel in those agencies so they can facilitate referrals and become advocates for students and families. Both the college supervisor and the on-site instructor assist the candidate with making these connections.

Recommended rating: Met

Diversity and School Climate

School-wide and individual prevention activities are frequently part of the work of practicum candidates. Their course preparation for these activities include: Advanced Clinical Treatment of Families, and a course in Cultural and Ethnic Perspectives. The students provide evidence of Cultural and Ethnic practice in their Student Portfolios.

Recommended rating: Met

Professional Development

The MSW Field Practicum Learning Agreement is an on-going self-analysis for candidates in consultation with their college supervisor and their on-site instructor. Each quarter the student establishes objectives for each goal and evaluates progress toward meeting the goals. At the end of the quarter, a new agreement is designed based on performance and identified areas for growth. Part of the assessment includes artifacts that the student has developed and used during the quarter, including family assessments, treatment plans, etc.

Recommended rating: Met

Information Resources and Technology

Technology is integrated in two areas for school social workers. One of these is the use of technology for assessments, interventions, and information. The second is used to help students, families, schools and communities to access resources. According to faculty and candidates, course work and practicum experiences prepare students in both of these areas.

Recommended rating: Met

Professional Code of Conduct and Ethics

Candidates articulated the importance of the code of conduct and ethics throughout the program. The NASW Code of Ethics is the expected standard, and candidates report on the implementation of this code in their practice on each MSW Field Practicum Learning Agreement.

Recommended rating: Met