

Academic Program Assessment Plan: Department of Social Work, Colorado State University-Pueblo

Identification:

The Department of Social Work maintains national accreditation through the Council on Social Work Education, Commission on Accreditation for the BSW program. The MSW program is currently in candidacy status. The plan was prepared through departmental deliberations according to the Educational and Policy Accreditation Standards effective in January, 2015. The primary contact for assessment questions or concerns is Dr. Arlene Reilly-Sandoval, Department Chair. She can be reached at 719-549-2691 or at a.reillysandoval@csupueblo.edu

Mission, Goals, and Student Learning Outcomes:

Colorado State System Mission Statement

Colorado State University was established by state law:

“There is hereby established a University at Pueblo, to be known as Colorado State University Pueblo, which shall be a regional, comprehensive university with moderately selective admissions standards. The University shall offer a broad array of baccalaureate programs with a strong professional focus and a firm grounding in the liberal arts and sciences. The University shall also offer selected masters level graduate programs” (Colorado Statutes 23-55-101, as cited in Colorado State University-Pueblo Catalog, 2018-2019, p. 14).

Colorado State University-Pueblo Mission Statement

In April, 2005, the Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System adopted a complementary, focused mission statement for the University that stresses its distinctiveness and central commitments:

“Colorado State University-Pueblo is committed to excellence, setting the standard for regional comprehensive universities in teaching, research and service by providing leadership and access for its region while maintaining its commitment to diversity” (Colorado State University-Pueblo Catalog, 2018-2019, p. 14).

College of Humanities and Social Sciences Mission Statement

The college’s mission statement is:

“The mission of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is to help students develop critical thinking skills, aesthetic awareness, and ethical perspectives, to provide them with the tools and expertise necessary to function as responsible citizens and professionals and to engage in intellectual and artistic pursuits. Faculty members are committed to high quality teaching, theoretical and applied research, scholarship, creativity, to effective service to the University, the profession, and the region, and to the innovative use of technology in these endeavors. The college strives to be a community of learners, teachers, and scholars responsive to the challenges of a diverse society, a vulnerable environment, and an increasingly technological and interdependent world “ (Colorado State University-Pueblo Catalog, 2018-2019, p. 159).

Program Mission Statement

The Master of Social Work program at CSU Pueblo prepares students for advanced social work practitioners with the knowledge, skills, and values for creating effective processes required to serve diverse client populations in systems of all sizes. Students will learn how to advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs as well as promote social justice.

Areas of commonality include professional preparation, acknowledgement of a diverse environment, and awareness of challenges within such an ever-changing environment. In addition, the department clearly situates itself within a regional, comprehensive university and a multi-faceted college.

Program Goals

1. Prepare advanced social work practitioners with the ethical consciousness, cultural competence, and desire to be lifelong learners who give back to the profession of social work and enhance the global community in which we live;
2. Provide students with the necessary advanced skills in engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation in order to competently serve diverse client populations at all levels of social work practice and across the lifespan utilizing the ecological perspective as a foundation; and
3. Prepare students to engage in policy practice, to advocate for social and economic justice, to engage in research in its many forms in order to better serve individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

The new assessment standards are termed competencies and practice behaviors and have been established by the Council on Social Work Education, Commission on Accreditation. They are:

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior;
2. Engage diversity and difference in practice;
3. Advance human rights, and social, economic, and environmental justice;
4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice;
5. Engage in policy practice;
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities; and
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Proficiency

The standard definition for the department of social work is that 80% of our students will meet or exceed the benchmark set for each measure. We use Department developed assessment tool for Generalist level students, which is reported in aggregate form. This tool measures knowledge, values, and cognitive and affective processes We say that 80% of our students should score 80% or higher for each 5-question set that measures a competency. For Specialized level students, we use the culminating project scores to measure knowledge, values, and cognitive-affective

processes. We say that 80% of our students will score “meets” or “exceeds” expectations for each competency. The final field evaluation in SW589 (Generalist students) and SW689 (Specialized students) measures student skill on each competency. We say 80% of our students will score “meets” or “exceeds” proficiency on the final field evaluation.

Assessment Methods

The MSW program assesses nine competencies and accompanying 28 practice behaviors every year. Each behavior is measured at least twice, including one direct and one indirect measure, and summative assessments are conducted.

The program will utilize a faculty developed assessment tool (test). This test is administered at the end of the second seminar and field experience, SW 589, each Summer. The Culminating Project and the accompanying rubric is also scored in the SW687 course in the Summer.

Assessment of competencies during field placement occurs at the end of the Summer semester for Generalist level students in SW589. It occurs in the Spring semester for Specialized students in SW689.

Assessment Results

Assessment results will be summarized by the MSW Coordinator and department chair and presented to the faculty during department meetings. The fall department meetings will be the primary times during which discussion of assessment results will occur. They will be discussed early in the semester in case there is a need to make changes in the catalog or curriculum. The results are used for program planning and improvement, strategic planning, and identification of areas of growth.

Continuous Process

The process of assessment is guaranteed to be continuous because we have institutionalized the process and the measures. The department chair will bring all data to the attention of the faculty, and all reviews, evaluations, and changes will be approved by the department prior to any changes being made anywhere within the curriculum or the assessment procedures. Reports are provided to the faculty during the beginning weeks of every fall semester. Annual reports to the university will be made utilizing a process of selective reporting.. Finally, assessment results are posted on the program homepage.