

**Council on Social Work Education
Commission on Accreditation**

Site Visit Report

Program Visited Name: San Francisco State University MSW Program
Program Visited State: CA
Program Level visited: MSW
Date of Site Visit: 3/5 and 3/6/18

Site Visitor Name: Elizabeth Walker, LMSW, EdD

1. Include a copy of the site visit schedule or a list of people with who met with the site visitor during the visit.
Attached
2. Discuss general questions related to these three standards, using the *2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)*, with the program:

In terms of program mission and goals (**AS 1.0**),

conversations with faculty, students, and administration (president, interim provost, and dean) reflected consistently that the mission and goals are in alignment with those of the university. When asked, students reflected on the importance of the Code of Ethics to this area. Administration seemed to feel that social work's integration into the university flows from and reflects institutional goals and mission. Several mentions were made of the institutional focus on advocacy, a core social work value. Faculty were able to outline how students' placements in field are determined within the context of advocacy when possible. And given the geographic area served (small), it is possible for them to carefully identify and vet placements. Since there is no advanced standing component, students are with the program for two years, as closely connected cohorts, which makes careful placements not only possible but feasible. This approach seems to spread the mission and goals throughout the program and seems to have an influence on the entire institution.

In terms of diversity (**AS 3.0**),

the consensus of both administration and the social work program was that diversity is much more difficult to achieve than one might anticipate given the location of the institution. They were aware of some imbalances in representation of various ethnic groups, both in faculty/staff and students, and hope to address them as the program grows. Ethnic diversity has become less prevalent in their geographic area (which is also primarily their catchment area) as the price of housing and other costs of living have escalated dramatically. This escalation has forced lower income individuals out of the system – both employees and students. In addition, no new faculty have been hired since 2009, making any changes in that demographic impossible until growth supports an increase in faculty. Even retirements have not called for replacements/new faculty, since they had a cushion in their ratios. They did report – consistently – that they have sought to reflect the students and community throughout the curriculum, and that they emphasize intersectionality across the board. They try to embed cultural humility everywhere. The students also reflected the frustration which is apparent in these imbalances and were aware of the cost-of-living issues but hoped the program can become more balanced in the near future.

In terms of Assessment (**AS 4.0**),

one approach the program has taken is to work with field instructors to ask what a student wishes he/she knew going into the program. They also ask about what the field instructors were surprised students don't know. They then try to fill in these holes. The program reports that it has spent considerable time infusing the EPAS (2015) into the entire curriculum. In terms of the challenges and achievements the program has experienced in making specific and continuous efforts to provide a learning context in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity are practiced, please see 3.0 above. The program seems to have achieved a degree of homogeneity of approach based on the faculty being together since 2009 (with the addition of the new Program Director in 2016). They have a sort of shorthand, which carries over into agreement on most major points. They seem to appreciate each other, and as result of that, appreciate the variety of students they are admitting. They use a standardized admissions process which was recently changed and changed back again, and which they anticipate will enable them to admit a more diverse set of students in the future. They also anticipate growth, which may help.

Instructions for Specific Questions

Accreditation Standard M2.0.2: The program provides a rationale for its formal curriculum design for generalist practice demonstrating how it is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field.

The program discusses the logic model and provided course descriptions. However, the program did not provide a rationale for its formal curriculum design demonstrating how it is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field.

The program provided the visitor a rationale for its formal curriculum design demonstrating how it is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field. Components included a review of the courses and how each “scaffolds” onto the others. For example, in the first term, students take courses which encourage the program’s focus on global poverty, which reinforces and extends its emphasis on advocacy. A practice course sequence begins immediately, continuing the emphasis on global issues and advocacy. Faculty believe this emphasis on global poverty sets them apart and structures the curriculum in an uncommon way. Other examples were provided, including the transitional nature of first term to second term courses as they increase in depth. The DSM is emphasized throughout. It is the visitor’s understanding that the Program plans to provide a thorough written elaboration of this rationale to the Commission.

Accreditation Standard M2.1.2: The program provides a rationale for its formal curriculum design for specialized practice demonstrating how the design is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field.

The program provided course descriptions and discussed optional opportunities. However, the program did not provide a rationale for its formal curriculum design demonstrating how it is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field.

The program provided a rationale for its formal curriculum design demonstrating how it is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field. The coherent curriculum is exemplified by the unified nature of the program – there are few electives, although social work with schools, the legal system, and child welfare are available, in large part by the significant size of their Title IV-E cohort. In addition, the few electives can come from other disciplines such as psychology. But given the small number of electives, the curriculum seems well integrated. Courses build on each other, and lead into a field experience for which all students are similarly prepared by the consistent classroom curriculum. This consistency is also a result of the lack of Advanced Standing, requiring all students to be in a cohort model with almost identical curriculum.

Accreditation Standard M2.1.3: The program describes how its area(s) of specialized practice extend and enhance the nine Social Work Competencies (and any additional competencies developed by the program) to prepare students for practice in the area(s) of specialization.

The program described how its area(s) of specialized practice extend and enhance the nine Social Work Competencies. However, it is unclear which are the behaviors for the area of specialized practice.

The program described to the visitor how its area of specialized practice extends and enhances the nine Social Work Competencies (and any additional competencies developed by the program) to prepare students for practice in the area(s) of specialization by saying that they have one area of specialized practice, and that their core competencies are clearly outlined. There was a lack of clarity in the self-study; however, in the visit it became clear that students either enter the Individuals, Families, and Groups (IFG) practice emphasis or the Title IV-E IFG emphasis. They specified that they have not developed advanced competencies but “expanded” the core competencies. They believe that the behaviors that apply to the area of specialized practice (Individuals, Families, and Groups) were/are bolded in the self-study (and repeated below):

Competency One:

- 1. Effectively engage in productive problem-solving and appropriate conflict resolution and utilize open communication.*
- 2. Demonstrate an ability to distinguish between personal and professional values in a practice context and exhibit an understanding of the ways in which personal experiences and affective reactions can influence professional judgment and behavior.*
- 3. Engage with those from professions other than social work when involved in interprofessional collaboration and effectively employ consultation.*
- 4. Demonstrate a commitment through action to advancing the field of social work through advocacy and ongoing learning.*

Competency Two:

- 1. Identify forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination, including social economic, political, and cultural exclusions that may marginalize and alienate, or alternatively contribute to privilege and power.*
- 2. Identify ways of addressing power and control factors that affect the experiences of diverse populations and modify intervention methods based on those evaluations.*
- 3. Employ methods that reflect cultural humility and sensitivity in relationships with clients and communities.*

Competency Three:

- 1. Articulate, analyze, and apply the ways in which every person, regardless of position in society, deserves fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education.*
- 2. Advance social justice (through anti-oppressive practice), economic justice (through poverty-aware practice), and environmental justice (by enhancing clients' relationships with the natural world) and demonstrate critical thinking on how to apply anti-oppressive practice in oppressive and restrictive systems and/or situations that run contrary to a social justice framework.*

Competency Four:

1. *Engage in research that is inclusive of the clients, communities, and organizations involved and incorporate their participation in all aspects of the research process.*

Competency Five:

1. *Create alternative policy solutions and interventions to social issues that are culturally relevant, appropriate, and sensitive to the diverse populations affected by these policies.*
2. *Effectively engage action systems to achieve desired policy changes.*
3. *Evaluate the impact of change efforts, activist agendas, and practice results.*

Competency Six:

1. *Identify ways in which personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with a diversity of clients and constituencies.*

Competency Seven:

1. *Apply critical and culturally informed practice and analyze differential diagnostic and assessment criteria including developmental and cultural considerations, as well as the impact of assessment methods, on client and community self-determination and empowerment.*
2. *Engage with individuals, families, groups, and organizations in ways that reflect cultural humility in assessing and analyzing their strengths and needs.*
3. *Demonstrate understanding of the ways in which personal experiences and affective reactions may affect assessment and decision-making.*

Competency Eight:

1. *Plan with individuals, families, and groups to apply interventions through a variety of methods and strategies as appropriate to their contexts and needs for change.*
2. *Collaborate with clients in addressing long-term developmental goals and addressing obstacles that may be presented by institutional settings and their operational policies.*
3. *Create innovative therapeutic modalities contributing to culturally affirmative and individualized development and advocacy.*
4. *Facilitate growth and the realization of full potential among clients and communities.*

Competency Nine:

1. *Identify evidence of change and development upon termination.*

Accreditation Standard 2.2.5: The program describes how its field education program provides a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs and a minimum of 900 hours for master's programs.

The program describes that it provides a minimum of 1200 hours, not 900 hours, of field education for the master's program. However, the program references that it would benefit from a standardized practice of recording hours.

*The program described that it requires **1200 hours of field education**, and explained that they are in the process of creating forms to record hours more formally. They believe that they controlled for completion of hours by having a small program where the faculty and field instructors are in contact very often and problems are reported early, and that the requirement for 1,200 hours of field experience has more than offset any issues with the lack of formality they have practiced. They understand the importance of completing this process of having a more formal structure. They realize they need to provide confirmation to the COA.*

Accreditation Standard M2.2.9: The program describes how its field education program specifies the credentials and practice experience of its field instructors necessary to design field learning opportunities for students to demonstrate program social work competencies. Field instructors for master's students hold a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and have 2 years post-master's social work practice experience. For cases in which a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree or does not have the required experience, the program assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective and describes how this is accomplished.

The program described the credentials and practice experience of its field instructors. However, the program did not specify if field instructors for master's students hold a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. In addition, the program did not explain how it assumes the responsibility for reinforcing the social work perspective and describes how this is accomplished.

The program clearly specified that almost all field instructors for master's students hold a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program – all who attended the meeting with the site visitor do have MSWs. But in addition, the program explained that when the task supervisor at the field site cannot carry out this reinforcement because he or she does not have appropriate credentials and experience, often others at the site are able to do so (that is, they hold an MSW and have appropriate experience; they are just not tasked with supervising this student on a regular basis, but are able to provide the social work perspective regularly), individual faculty members assume the responsibility for reinforcing the social work perspective and described that this is accomplished by one hour per week meetings with students, infusing the social work perspective. They emphasized several times that this happens very rarely and is always taken care of by the program.

Accreditation Standard M3.1.1: The program identifies the criteria it uses for admission to the social work program. The criteria for admission to the master's program must include an earned baccalaureate degree from a college or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting association. Baccalaureate social work graduates entering master's social work programs are not to repeat what has been achieved in their baccalaureate social work programs.

The program identified the criteria it uses for admission to the social work program. In addition, the program references a committee that examines similar courses in the BASW and MSW programs to ensure that the content is not repetitive. However, it is unclear how baccalaureate social work graduates entering master's social work programs are not to repeat what has been achieved in their baccalaureate social work programs.

The program explained that baccalaureate social work graduates enter the program, which does not have advanced standing, and take the entire curriculum. Their position is that the first year curriculum, the arena in which it might be possible that curriculum might be repetitive, is of such a depth that it is not repetitive. The argument is that it is significantly deeper than a baccalaureate program's coursework and thus does not repeat. Terminology used reflects that students are

expected to “perform at higher levels of cognition,” and the program uses Bloom’s Taxonomy to depict and structure these levels. When in conversation with the students, the visitor casually mentioned Bloom’s, not expecting more than a brief acknowledgement that they knew what it meant. But the students were clearly very familiar with the concept and how it plays out in this program.

Accreditation Standard 3.1.2: The program describes the policies and procedures for evaluating applications and notifying applicants of the decision and any contingent conditions associated with admission.

The program described the procedures for evaluating applications and notifying applicants of the decision. However, it is unclear how the criteria outlined are used to evaluate applicant and make admissions decisions.

The program clearly described to the visitor the policies and procedures for evaluating applications and notifying applicants of the decision and any contingent conditions associated with admission. Typically, the GPA serves as the core criterion, followed by length and quality of volunteer/paid work experience, values, references, and writing assignments. They have a large number of applicants and a process that requires much time from the committee. They report that they do not use contingent conditions associated with admission, and that a standardized approach to looking at applicants is utilized. Faculty review applications with stringent GPA requirements, although in the interests of diversity, plan to broaden options for admission to include volunteer and work experience.

Their Title IV-E Project has more stringent and diversity-specific requirements, including extra weight for bilingual applicants to reflect the needs of the child welfare system.

Accreditation Standard M3.2.4: The master's social work program identifies no fewer than six full-time faculty with master's degrees in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and whose principal assignment is to the master's program. The majority of the full-time master's social work program faculty has a master's degree in social work and a doctoral degree, preferably in social work.

The program identified the baccalaureate and master’s program faculty. However, it is not clear how the six faculty have full-time assignment and principal assignment to the master’s program.

The program identified an appropriate number of faculty, and acknowledged that it must more clearly and formally align faculty with program. Both administration and faculty understand the importance of this alignment, and anticipate addressing it in the near future. This plan was clear in both conversations with the faculty and with the three administrators (President, Interim Provost, and Dean).

Accreditation Standard M3.3.4(c): The program describes the procedures for determining the program director’s assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership to the program. To carry out the administrative functions specific to responsibilities of the social work program, a minimum of 50% assigned time is required at the master’s level. The program demonstrates this time is sufficient.

The program specified that the program director has at least 50% assigned time to carry out the administrative functions specific to responsibilities of the social work program. However, the program

did not describe the procedures for determining the program director's assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership to the program.

The program described the procedures for determining the program director's assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership to the program. Their position is that given the administration's support for the new program director, the clearly 50% time released to the MSW Program is adequate. Her other responsibilities are to the Social Work Department (including the BSW). She works well with the administration, which expressed strong support for her and the needed changes. In some ways, it appeared to the visitor that the institution and the Program were waiting on the LOI and this report to institute changes they knew were required.

Accreditation Standard M3.3.5(c): The program describes the procedures for calculating the field director's assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership for field education. To carry out the administrative functions of the field education program at least 50% assigned time is required for master's programs. The program demonstrates this time is sufficient.

The program states that the field director's teaching equates less than half of her workload responsibilities and duties. However, the program did not specify that the field director receives at least 50% assigned time. In addition, the program did not describe the procedures for calculating the field director's assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership for field education or demonstrate that it is sufficient.

The program described the procedures for calculating the field director's assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership for field education. She is new to the position, and clearly the program confirmed that the field director received 50% assigned time to carry out the administrative functions of the field education program. The program demonstrates that they believe this time will be sufficient once she has additional experience with field under her belt.

Accreditation Standard 3.3.6: The program describes its administrative structure for field education and explains how its resources (personnel, time and technological support) are sufficient to administer its field education program to meet its mission and goals.

The program discussed the administrative structure and personnel in field education. However, the program did not describe how the resources are sufficient to administer its field education program to meet its mission and goals.

The program described to the visitor that the resources allotted for field (personnel, time and technological support) are sufficient to administer its field education program to meet its mission and goals, but agreed that they need additional specificity as to how. They anticipate providing that specificity in their response. Changes that are coming to the Program in terms of growth will have an impact on these needs, and administration is aware of those demands and seem thoroughly prepared to provide what is needed.

Accreditation Standard 3.4.1: The program describes the procedures for budget development and administration it uses to achieve its mission and goals. The program submits a completed budget form and explains how its financial resources are sufficient and stable to achieve its mission and goals.

The program described the procedures for budget development and administration it uses to achieve its mission and goals. However, the program did not explain how its financial resources are sufficient and stable to achieve its mission and goals.

The program and the administration explained that its financial resources are sufficient and stable to achieve its mission and goals, and that the administration fully supports the direction the which the Program is headed. They believe that as the Program grows, additional resources will be made available. Part of the issue discussed is that with a cap of 55 students total, the resources required to maintain accreditation (1:12 ratio, etc.) are adequate from their perspective. The visitor observed nothing indicating otherwise.

Accreditation Standard 4.0.4: The program describes the process used to evaluate outcomes and their implications for program renewal across program options. It discusses specific changes it has made in the program based on these assessment outcomes with clear links to the data.

The program described the process used to evaluate outcomes and their implications for program renewal across program options. However, the program notes that the program will make programmatic or curriculum changes in the future and noted that there was not time to utilize their results.

The program discussed that the timeline of the self-study leading to the site visit has not made it possible to make specific changes yet. It realizes that it is necessary to provide the documentation, as they begin to make these changes, based on these assessment outcomes with clear links to the data. Clearly they have new data, and are determined to use that data to close loops as needed. The Program and the administration understand the need to do so and then to document it to the COA.

