

Program Review

**Social Work: BSW
Follow-Up Report**

College of Health Professions

October 2010



MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

Program Review
Marshall University

Instructions to Program Regarding the Follow-Up Report

At its meeting of April 24, 2009, the Marshall University Board of Governors recommended that the BSW (Social Work) program be continued with **corrective action**. They specifically recommended that, prior to any development of the required self-study for accreditation review, a team of external reviewers/consultants be identified and invited to conduct a review of the BSW program. The purpose of the external review was to provide a thorough and independent analysis of the program's curriculum in light of the disciplinary/professional standards and expectations.

External reviewers visited the Social Work program in February 2010. The following document lists the reviewers' findings and reports steps the program has or is taking to address each issue identified by the reviewers.

October 12, 2010

TO: Gayle Ormiston, Provost
FROM: Michael Prewitt, Dean COHP
RE: Department of Social Work Review

Gayle,

Dr. Hossler has submitted this letter of response to the external program review of the Social Work Department, dated February 2-3, 2010. It appears the Social Work faculty are making slow progress in addressing the recommendations provided by the review team. The letter provides details on this progress for each recommendation.

If positive, sustained changes are to be made in the Social Work program, I believe we will need to recruit a new faculty member, at the program director level, one who can also assist in moving Social Work toward the MSW level. I believe I have some flexibility in open positions in the College to address this issue.

As Dr. Hossler mentioned in his letter, I will be facilitating a meeting later this month with Social Work faculty to discuss the timeline and work plan for submitting the self study document. As you recall, they received a new deadline for submission of the self study of August 2011.

I welcome your comments as we continue to work to strengthen the Department of Social Work.

Dr. Gayle Ormiston
Provost and Vice President
Academic Affairs
Marshall University

Dr. Ormiston:

A letter from you, dated May 4, 2010, said that, “.....in April 2009 the Marshall University Board of Governors recommended that the BSW (Social Work) program be continued with corrective action. They specifically recommended that, prior to any development of the required self study for accreditation review, a team of external reviewers/consultants be identified and invited to conduct a review of the BSW program.” In response to this directive, the services of Dr. Charles Zastrow, a well published scholar on social work accreditation, and Dr. Martha Armstrong, a veteran of program reviews recommended by Dr. Mary Todd, completed their external review of Marshall University’s Social Work program on February 2-3, 2010, meeting with faculty, staff, and the dean’s office as well as reviewing curriculum, syllabi, and student files. Their recommendations, as well as the program’s actions to resolve all issues they identified, are summarized below.

First, Drs. Armstrong and Zastrow recommended continuation of the BSW program. Second, they recommended that the program request a one-time, one year extension for submission of the Council on Social Work Education self study. Third, they recommended that the department appoint a faculty member to lead the self study process and provide release time (by using adjunct faculty) for authoring the self study report. A social work faculty member has been awarded three hours release time and appointed to lead the departmental self-study and accreditation process. Under this faculty member’s leadership, a onetime delay of 12 months in the program’s accreditation process was sought and approved by the Council on Social Work Education. This delay will allow sufficient time for an appropriate self-study to be completed by the August 2011 deadline and will significantly increase the likelihood of a successful accreditation process. The department will seek appropriate adjunct faculty where necessary to fill the programmatic requirements for instruction related to the release time granted. Currently, there is a sufficient pool of qualified social workers with a MSW to meet this demand. After submission of the self-study, site visits will occur during the month of November 2011, with a final decision regarding accreditation expected in June 2012. To write a comprehensive self study, it also will be necessary to secure the involvement of all social work faculty. To that end, the department has scheduled a faculty meeting on October 27, 2010 with the Dean of the College of Health Professions to confirm deadlines and to provide clear instructions and expectations of all faculty.

The external reviewers’ fourth recommendation was to offer alternative academic appointments to faculty who requested such. One social work faculty member has requested a future appointment in the College’s newly approved Public Health and/or Health Informatics Programs. While both of these areas would be a change from this faculty member’s previous duties at Marshall, this individual has the qualifications for

such an appointment. We are currently studying the ramifications of making this personnel change.

The reviewers' fifth recommendation was for the program to consider clinical contract as well as tenure track options to recruit and retain MSW and/or PhD program faculty. The department plans to explore the use of clinical adjunct faculty to fill any needs while seeking qualified PhD candidates when and should this need arise due to faculty reassignments or future resignations.

Drs. Armstrong and Zastrow further noted that the Social Work program must be responsive to the following 2008 Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS):

1. Standard 3.5.1: Budget development and administration – The Social Work program has made the budgetary process more transparent. The faculty have information regarding the totality of the budget as well as limitations on spending. The budget is maintained by the interim chair and decisions on how the budget is spent are discussed in faculty meetings, with the final decisions resting with the interim chair and current program director with approval of the dean.
2. Standard 3.5.4: Updating Social Work library holdings – A Social Work faculty member worked with the library to identify specific Social Work holdings and reports that no identified deficit currently exists in library holdings.
3. Standard 2.1.7: Orientation, field instruction training and continuing dialogue with field education settings and field instructors – Field instruction training has been held twice this year and is planned again for the fall semester of 2010. Field instruction included inviting all clinical preceptors to campus for meetings to discuss the new EPAS standards set by Council on Social Work Education and to assist clinical preceptors to incorporate EPAS standards into clinical experiences.
4. Standard 3.2.6: Academic and professional advising – All departmental faculty have the responsibility for advising. All students admitted to the department are assigned an advisor by a social work faculty member at the beginning of each semester. During summer orientation, this faculty member serves as advisor to all new Social Work majors, dividing them among all faculty at the beginning of fall semester. This system allows faculty involvement while maintaining equity amongst all in terms of overall advising responsibilities.
5. Standards 3.2.9 and 3.2.10: student participation – A Social Work faculty member will identify one student from each of the three years of the major to participate in a Social Work Department Strategy Council. This council will meet regularly with the faculty throughout the year to suggest changes that might benefit students as well as to identify challenges within the program. Students will receive annual surveys after graduation. The Department of Student Services in COHP will assist the faculty in meeting these requirements by designing, mailing, and disseminating surveys to the students.

The faculty believe that these changes will strengthen the Social Work program and assure continued accreditation. The Department of Social Work welcomes your input

into the proposed changes and stands ready to make additional changes you feel necessary.

Dr. Charles Hossler,
Interim Chair
Department of Social Work

cc Dr. Mary Beth Reynolds
cc Dr. Michael Prewitt