

# Dean's Response to the Review of the Social Work Program for Reaccreditation by the Council on Social Work Education

May 15, 2017

I appreciate the work of the Social Work faculty in preparing their very detailed self-study and addendum for the CSWE, and that of the site visitor (Dr. Randy Magen) in visiting WSU and preparing his report.

Questions raised by the CSWE in their review of the self-study were answered by the program's 113-page addendum and by program faculty and students during the site visit. Although the CSWE's official decision on reaccreditation will not be received for some time, the feedback in the site visitor's report is very positive, and I expect that the CSWE to determine that all accreditation standards have been met.

## Mission and goals

The site visit report notes that the program's mission and goals are consistent and appropriate in aiming to prepare students "for practice that is relevant to the needs of the populations in Northern Utah and Ogden in particular." The program response further notes that their mission and goals are closely tied to those of the University, especially though the program's emphasis on service.

## Diversity

The site visit report approvingly notes the program's strong emphasis, in both the explicit curriculum and the implicit curriculum, on diversity – a particular challenge when many students come from backgrounds that are ethnically and religiously rather homogeneous. The value of respecting and celebrating diversity of various kinds pervades the experience of our students. The site visit report notes that the faculty are actively working on the challenge of enhancing the writing skills of Latino/Latina students whose first language is not English.

## Assessment

The site visit report and program response indicate that the Social Work program has a clear and detailed system to assess student learning, using various measures. Faculty discuss assessment results, and when appropriate, use them to modify the curriculum, as for example in addressing assessment results showing that student understanding of social welfare policy was not reaching benchmark levels.

## Field placement and generalist practice opportunities

The site visit report and program response indicate that field placement students are afforded an adequate number and variety of opportunities to demonstrate practice competencies, through agreements with field agencies, student individual learning plans, and regular evaluations of core competencies and practice behaviors.

The report and response also indicate that both practice and an updated policy for the (rare) cases in which a student has their field placement in an agency in which they are employed are appropriate.

#### Students and formulation/modification of policies

The site report and program response make it clear that students have appropriate opportunities to influence the formulation and modification of program policies, though such means as the online student exit survey and social work student organizations.

#### Program director and field director

The program has documented that the program director is a full-time, tenured faculty member with adequate release times for administrative duties, and that the field director has sufficient assigned time to carry out his administrative duties.

In sum, the Social Work program has a well-qualified and dedicated faculty, a strong curriculum well-suited to the needs of the regional practice community, and a successful field placement system. I am confident that they will receive reaccreditation from the CSWE.