2015 UMBC Social Work Graduates Student Evaluation Report

Instrument
The evaluations contained 88 questions with 5-point Likert scale responses, with higher scores indicating the program exceeded their expectations of preparation, capturing a variety of aspects of the Social Work program and the field experience. There were 50 questions about the Social Work program, 8 questions regarding the agency where students participated in field placement, 12 questions about their field instructor, 11 questions about the assignments given in field placement, and 7 questions about their liaison. The evaluation also included 7 open-ended questions with space provided for student feedback; these questions are not included in this summary. Quantitative responses were entered in an SPSS database. The areas of concern were compiled by collecting the items that indicated a more negative spread with at least 20% of responses falling at 3 and below, while the areas of success were items with a more positive spread with at least 90% of responses falling at 4 and above.

Demographics
There were a total of 107 returned evaluations. The following charts represent the distribution of demographics among those students who responded:
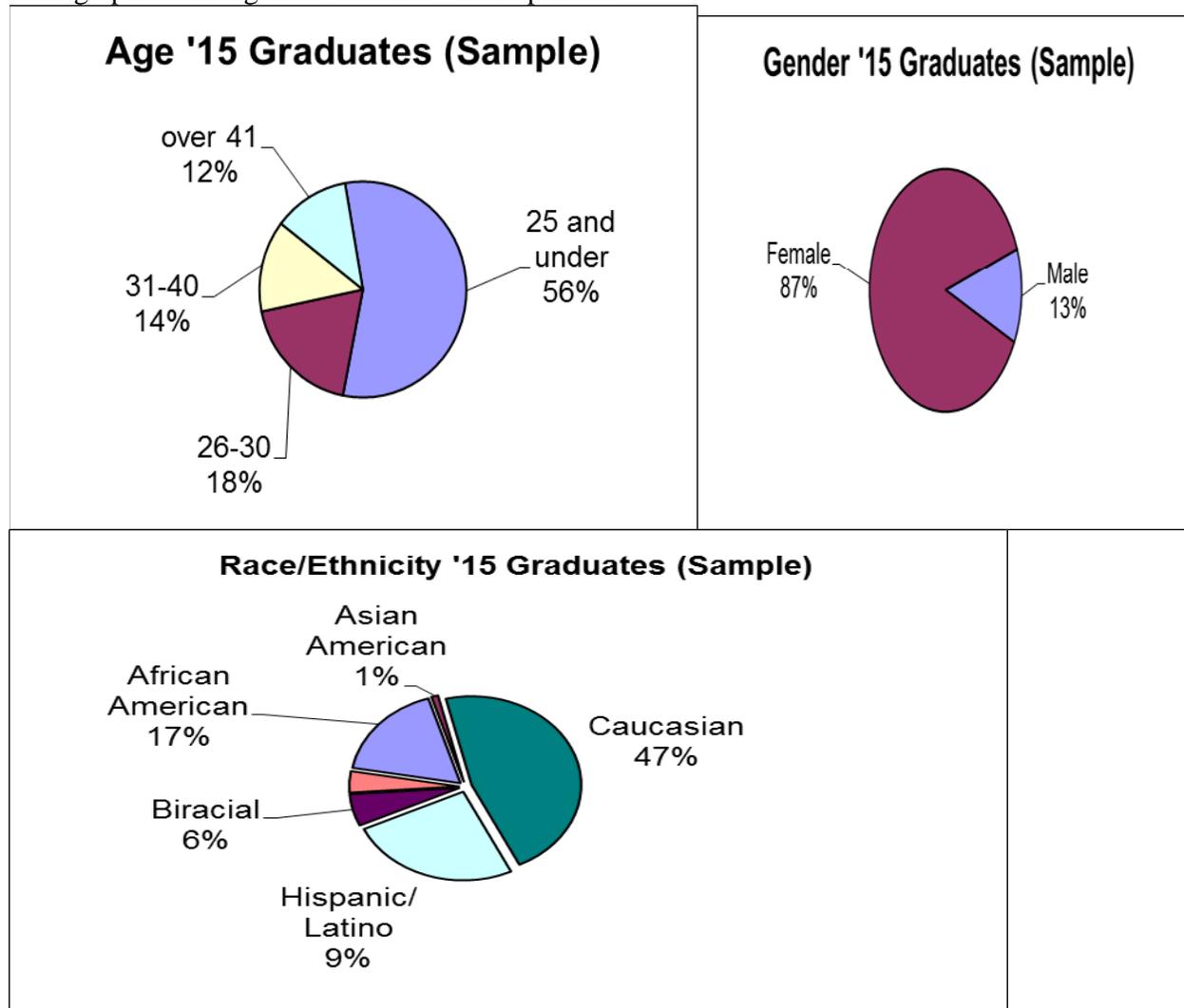
Analysis

Program Evaluation

Analysis of the responses to the evaluation yielded some areas of consideration. According to students who responded to questions about skills for generalist practice with different client populations, respondents felt that:

Item	% Not at All – Generally Met (1-3)	Generally Met/Exceeded – Exceeded (4 & 5)
EP 2.1.1 #4 Use supervision and consultation	25.3	74.7
EP 2.1.6 #22 Critically evaluated and used research knowledge to guide practice	27.3	72.7
EP 2.1.6 #23 Used research evidence to inform practice	30.3	69.7
EP 2.1.6 #25 Critically evaluated and used theoretical knowledge to guide practice	26.3	73.7
EP 2.1.8 #28 Collaborated with colleagues and clients for effective policy action	37.8	62.2
EP 2.1.8 #29 Analyzed, formulated, and advocated for policies that advance social well-being	41.2	58.8
EP 2.1.8 #30 Advocated for programs, services, and policies that promote economic and social justice and enhance the well-being of clients and others in need of assistance	29.6	70.4
EP 2.1.9 #31 Used information technology to enhance effectiveness as a social work professional	29.6	70.4
EP 2.1.9 #32 Provided leadership in promoting sustainable changes in the service delivery and improved the quality of social services	31.6	68.4
EP 2.1.9 #33 Continuously discovered, appraised and attended to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services	36.7	63.3
EP 2.1.10 (a) #35 Appropriately used the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with families	35.7	64.3
EP 2.1.10 (a) #36 Appropriately used the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with groups	30.6	69.4
EP 2.1.10 (a) #37 Appropriately used the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with organizations	42.9	57.1

Item	% Not at All – Generally Met (1-3)	Generally Met/Exceeded – Exceeded (4 & 5)
EP 2.1.10 (a) #38 Appropriately used the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with communities	46.9	53.1
EP 2.1.10 (b) #41 Collected, organized, and interpreted client data	27.6	72.4
EP 2.1.10 (b) #44 Select appropriate intervention strategies	23.5	76.5
EP 2.1.10 (c) #45 Initiated actions to achieve organizational goals	29.6	70.4
EP 2.1.10 (c) #46 Implemented prevention interventions that enhance client capabilities	29.6	70.4
EP 2.1.10 (c) #49 Facilitated transitions and endings	28.6	71.4
EP 2.1.10 (d) #50 Critically analyzed, monitored, and evaluated interventions	27.6	72.4

Most of the students felt very positively about their ability to maintain professional roles and boundaries (93.9%) (EP2.1.1 #3). Many students (90.8%) felt that they could recognize and manage personal values (EP2.1.2 #7). Likewise, students responded that they gained sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working (90.8%) (EP2.1.4 #14). Most students who responded (94.9%) agreed that they were prepared to use empathy and other interpersonal skills (EP 2.1.10 (a) #39).

Agency Evaluation
The evaluation of field placements showed that 70.4% of students agreed that they received an adequate orientation to their specific assignments (FIELD3), while 29.6% were either neutral or disagreed. Also, 76.5% agreed that they received an adequate explanation of his/her role as a student in training; however, 23.5% were neutral or disagreed (FIELD4).

Most students (93%) felt social workers were accepted as professionals at their site (FIELD 5)and (92%) felt accepted as a student social worker and supported in his/her work by the interdisciplinary team (FIELD 6). Many students (92.9%) reported that they felt physically safe while providing services for their agency (FIELD7) and 90% of students agreed that they felt emotionally safe while providing services for their agency (FIELD8).

Field Instructor Evaluation
Of the 12 field instructor evaluation questions, two items were flagged as areas of concern: 23% of students were either neutral or disagreed with the statement, "I had a regular weekly tutorial conference with my field instructor"(INSTR9); 77% agreed, and 28% of students disagreed with the statement, "My field instructor required me to complete process recordings or tape recordings of interviews on a regular basis throughout the semester(s)" (INSTR12); 72% agreed.

Although the other field instructor items were not flagged as areas of concern, they did not meet the criteria for areas of success.

Assignments

Some students responded that their assignments in the following areas were in the high range of extent of experience: groups (60%) (ASSIGN3A), families (35%) (ASSIGN3B), individual clients (82%) (ASSIGN3C), intake/assessment (60%) (ASSIGN3D), referrals to community resources (61%) (ASSIGN3E), community involvements/contacts (42%) (ASSIGN3F), opportunities to engage in research (42%) (ASSIGN3G) and opportunities to link clients to other community resources/services (69%) (ASSIGN3H). The following percentages of students felt that their extent of experience in these areas of assignment was in the medium to low range: groups (40%) (ASSIGN3A), families (65%) (ASSIGN3B), individual clients (18%) (ASSIGN3C), intake/assessment (40%) (ASSIGN3D), referrals to community resources (39%) (ASSIGN3E), community involvements/contacts (58%) (ASSIGN3F), opportunities to engage in research (58%) (ASSIGN3G) and opportunities to link clients to other community resources/services (31%) (ASSIGN3H). Also, 82% of students agreed that their interventions influenced their clients' lives, while 18% felt neutral or disagreed with the statement (ASSIGN4).

Liaison Evaluation

Finally, 22.3% of students disagreed that seminar discussions contributed to what they learned and 77.7% agreed. And, 21.3% of students were neutral or disagreed that seminar discussions were useful, and 78.7% of students agreed with this statement (LIAIS6).

Although the other liaison items were not flagged as areas of concern, they did not meet the criteria for areas of success.

Conclusions

Overall, the evaluations were very positive. The modal response was 4 or 5 (5 being the highest score) for 98% (86 of 88 questions) of the program evaluation. The modal response was 5 for 100% of the agency, field instructor, and liaison evaluations. Of the 88 questions examined in this report, only 3 received a negative rating from the majority (over 50%) of the respondents. These focused on the lack of: experience with families (mode =1), community involvements/contacts (mode = 5), and opportunities to engage in research (mode = 3). However, recent curricula changes may address these issues including material on communities and organizations that has been added to a Methods course. Additionally, the Technology in Social Work course has been revised to enhance students' learning in this area. An area of concern that has existed over the last three years of program evaluation is the need for more research opportunities. Innovative ways to address this need and others identified by the evaluation will be part of the ongoing improvements in the department.

Program Evaluation

The program evaluation was reformatted in 2014 to better adhere to CSWE EPAS standards. There were 30 questions added to the program evaluation and some of the remaining questions were rephrased. Mean scores for each educational policy area showed no significant differences from 2014 to 2015, except 2.1.7 where a significant decrease was noted ($t(186) = 2.26$; $p = .025$) . The trend for most items showed a slight decrease; however, 2.1.9 showed a slight increase. The following chart provides means per EPAS criteria as stated in the evaluation

Educational Policy	2014	2015
	M (SD)	M (SD)
2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly	4.32 (.55)	4.29 (.52)
2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice	4.34 (.57)	4.30 (.60)
2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments	4.37 (.65)	4.31 (.71)
2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice	4.37 (.57)	4.31 (.59)
2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice	4.21 (.68)	4.12 (.69)
2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research	4.01 (.87)	4.08 (.75)
2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment	4.39 (.56)	4.19 (.66)*
2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services	3.79 (.92)	3.88 (.75)
2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice	3.69 (.89)	3.90 (.75)
2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities	4.10 (.70)	NA
Engagement 2.1.10(a)	4.06 (.70)	3.98 (.61)
Assessment 2.1.10(b)	4.27 (.65)	4.14 (.59)
Intervention 2.1.10(c)	4.06 (.70)	4.03 (.60)
Evaluate 2.1.10(d)	3.94 (1.03)	3.90 (.84)
Total	4.13 (.58)	4.11 (.52)

*Sig. at p<.05

Means Chart
The following chart illustrates the mean of the respondents' mean scores for each year of graduation by sections of the evaluation that remained consistent for field placement and liaison.

Student Program Evaluation Means 2008 - 2015

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Agency Evaluation Mean	4.42	4.50	4.42	4.50	4.51	4.37	4.42	4.46
Field Instructor Evaluation Mean	4.31	4.44	4.28	4.42	4.43	4.27	4.32	4.39
Liaison Evaluation Mean	4.46	4.63	4.67	4.50	4.51	4.51	4.66	4.62