

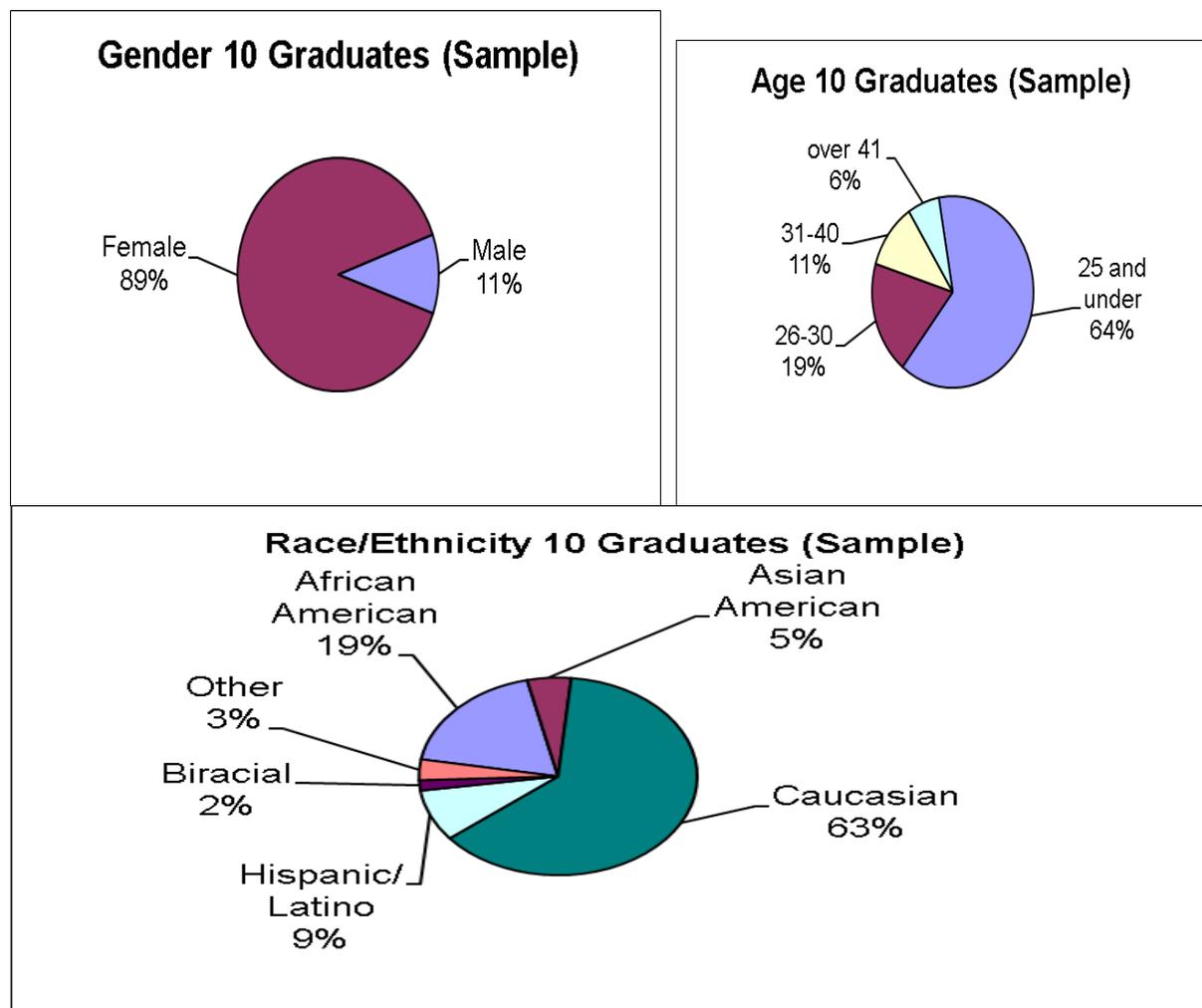
2010 UMBC Social Work Graduates Student Evaluation Report

Instrument

The evaluations contained 60 questions with 5-point Likert scale responses, with higher scores indicating more positive responses, capturing a variety of aspects of the Social Work program and the field experience. There were 21 questions about the Social Work program, 8 questions regarding the agency where students participated in field placement, 12 questions about their field instructor, 12 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 65 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, 74% felt that they were able to critically evaluate and use research (PROG7) to guide practice; however, the remaining 26% felt somewhat unable to do so. Three quarters of the students felt they were able to critically evaluate and use theoretical knowledge (PROG8) to guide practice, while the remaining quarter felt somewhat unable to do the same. In rating their preparedness to use the knowledge and skills of generalist practice with different client populations, respondents felt that they were: well prepared to work with families (65%), not at all prepared or somewhat unprepared to work with families (35%) (PROG13); well prepared to work with groups (72%), not at all prepared or somewhat unprepared (28%) (PROG14); well prepared to work with organizations (48%), not at all or somewhat unprepared to work with organizations (52%) (PROG15); and well prepared to work with communities (48%), not at all prepared or somewhat unprepared (52%) (PROG16). Of student respondents, 78% felt they were able to use information technology to enhance their effectiveness as social workers, while 22% felt they were somewhat or less able to do so (PROG17). Of the students who returned the evaluation, almost 78% felt prepared to advocate for programs, services and policies that promote economic and social justice and enhance the well-being of clients and others in need of assistance, while just over 22% did not (PROG20).

Most of the students felt that they were prepared to practice within the values and historical traditions of the social work profession at graduation (97%) (PROG1). Students felt very positively about their ability to practice within the ethics of the social work profession (98%) (PROG2). Many students felt that they were well prepared to work with clients of diverse backgrounds (PROG3). Likewise, students responded that they were very prepared to use a bio-psycho-social perspective to guide their assessment and intervention efforts with client systems (95%) (PROG5). Students also agreed that they were very well prepared to use a strengths-based perspective to guide their assessments and interventions (97%) (PROG6). Most students who responded (95%) agreed that they were prepared to demonstrate self-awareness and professional use of self in practice with client systems of all sizes (PROG11). Many students felt that they were prepared to appropriately use the knowledge and skills of generalist practice with individuals (95%) (PROG12) and 91% agreed that they were able to understand the impact that agency structure and function has on clients, workers, and the delivery of social work services (PROG19).

Agency Evaluation

The evaluation of field placements showed that 80% agreed that they received an adequate orientation to their specific assignments, while 20% were either neutral or disagreed (FIELD3).

The evaluation of field placements showed that 94% of students agreed that there was an acceptance of social workers as professionals in their agencies (FIELD5). Many students (92%) reported that they felt physically safe while providing services for their agency (FIELD7).

Field Instructor Evaluation

Of the 12 field instructor evaluation questions, three items were flagged as areas of concern: 28% of students were either neutral or disagreed with the statement, "I had a regular weekly tutorial conference with my field instructor"(INSTR9), 20% of students were neutral or disagreed with "My field instructor assisted me in implementing the objectives of my individual learning contract" (INSTR10), and 32% 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).

There were no Field Instructor items with a positive spread that would be considered an “area of success.”

Assignments

Of the students responding, 91% felt that they had many case assignments that promoted a learning of social work practice. Some students responded that their assignments in the following areas were in the high range of extent of experience: groups (52%) (ASSIGN3A), families (41%) (ASSIGN3B), individual clients (85%) (ASSIGN3C), intake/assessment (66%) (ASSIGN3D), discharge/aftercare planning (64%) (ASSIGN3E), community involvements/contacts (46%) (ASSIGN3F), opportunities to engage in research (37%) (ASSIGN3G) and opportunities to link clients to other community resources/services (67%) (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 (48%) (ASSIGN3A), families (59%) (ASSIGN3B), individual clients (15%) (ASSIGN3C), intake/assessment (36%) (ASSIGN3D), discharge/aftercare planning (36%) (ASSIGN3E), community involvements/contacts (54%) (ASSIGN3F), opportunities to engage in research (63%) (ASSIGN3G) and opportunities to link clients to other community resources/services (33%) (ASSIGN3H). Also, 87% of students agreed that their interventions influenced their clients’ lives, while 13% felt neutral or disagreed with the statement.

Liaison Evaluation

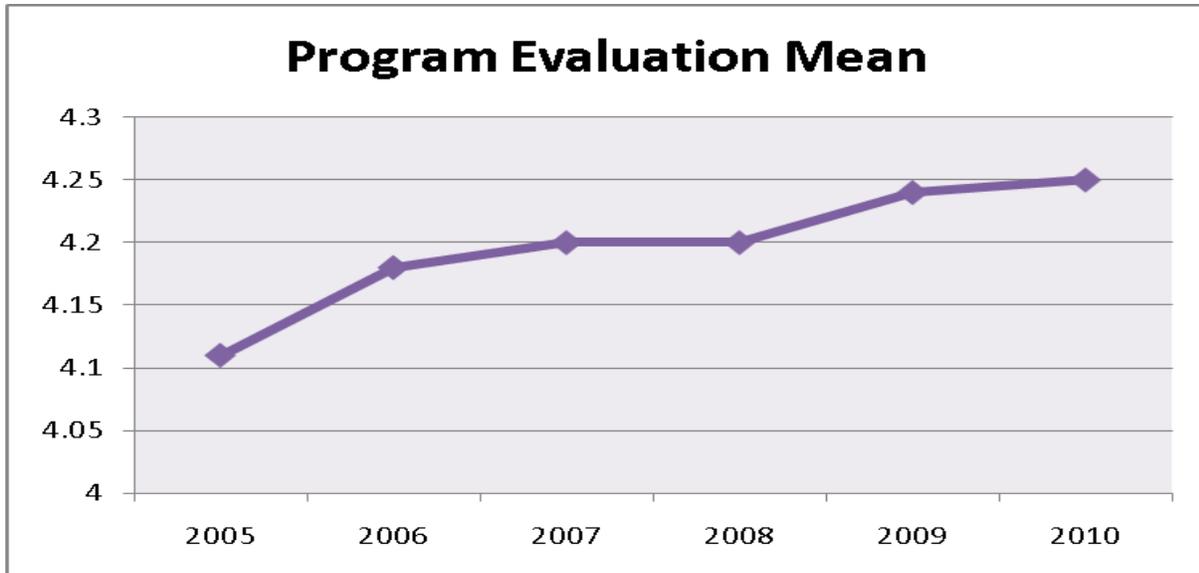
Finally, 80% of students who responded were neutral or disagreed that seminar discussions contributed to what they learned, while 20% agreed with this statement. Additionally, a large percentage of students agreed that: during orientation, the goals and objectives were clearly explained (97%) (LIAIS1), the liaison encouraged fair and open discussion (97%) (LIAIS3), the liaison actively encouraged all students to participate (98%) (LIAIS4), the liaison was interested in the students’ field work experience (100%) (LIAIS5), the monthly integrating seminars with their liaisons were useful (85%) (LIAIS6), and their liaison was accessible and available to them (94%) (LIAIS7).

Conclusions

Overall, the evaluations were positive. The modal response was 4 or 5 (5 being the highest score) for 90% of the program evaluation. The modal response was 5 for 100% of the agency, field instructor and liaison evaluations. Of the 60 questions examined in this report, only 5 received a negative rating from the majority (over 50%) of the respondents. These 5 focused on the lack of: experience with families, communities and organizations, and opportunities to engage in research. 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.

According to ANOVAs, there were no differences found in the responses from graduates in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 for average scores on the program evaluation and the agency evaluation; however, average scores for the field instructor evaluation were found to be significantly

different ($F = 2.55$; $p = .027$) where 2009 scores were higher than 2005 scores. Also, liaison evaluation average scores were found to be significantly higher in 2009 and 2010 than in 2005 ($F = 3.77$; $p = .002$) (see means chart on the next page). Finally, it should be noted that, using the criteria of 20% or more students responding with a 3 or lower to flag an item of concern, there were 30 questions flagged in the 2004 evaluations, 36 questions were flagged in the 2005 evaluations, 26 questions flagged in the 2006 evaluations, 25 questions were flagged in the 2007 evaluations, 16 questions were flagged in the 2008 evaluations, 17 questions were flagged in the 2009 evaluations, and 20 questions were flagged in the 2010 evaluations. The following chart highlights the positive incremental improvement in the program evaluation mean scores each year.



Means Chart.

The following chart illustrates the mean of the respondents' mean scores for each year of graduation by sections of the evaluation.

