

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo Social Work MSW

The 2022-2023 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for the Social Work MSW program in the College of Health and Human Development (HHD) concluded with a culmination meeting on December 8, 2023. The program is accredited by Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and submitted accreditation documents in lieu of program review documents.

The following people attended the meeting: Amir Dabirian (Provost), Elaine Frey (AVP for Graduate Studies, AVPGS), Kate Bono (Interim Dean, HHD), Michelle Martin (Department Chair), Mikyong Kim-Goh (Previous Department Chair), Juye Ji (faculty and assessment lead), and Su Swarat (Senior AVP for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, SAVPIEP).

The Provost commended the program for successfully completing the reaffirmation process and receiving excellent reviews from the accreditation agency. The program has made significant impact to the university and the community. The following specific accomplishments were highlighted during the PPR process:

- The program is the only Social Work program offered at a public institution in all of Orange County.
- The program's curriculum provides experiences in both a formal classroom setting and field application.
- The program has a wonderful group of faculty, who care deeply about the students and are willing to step in to help wherever and whenever needed.
- The program continues to grow its DEI efforts in various ways, such as implementing new diversity-focused programs (e.g. a brown bag speaker series for students) and continuing faculty training around DEI.
- The program is committed to a multicultural perspective and does an excellent job integrating this multicultural perspective in all courses.
- The program has strong collegial relationships among faculty, staff, and community agencies/organizations. The faculty's work goes well beyond the classroom, and have received a lot of grants because of the program's close ties to the community. The grants allow for stipends to support students, and at the same time, help the county resolve workforce shortage challenges.
- The program has a transparent and logical process and a well-functioning committee for designing its assessment framework and ensuring alignment with its three focus areas. CSWE commended the program for having an excellent assessment program.

Major recommendations and issues raised through the accreditation process were discussed as follows:

1. Enrollment:

- The Chair reported that the program tracks enrollment closely with the goal of enrolling about 100 students each fall. The program monitors attrition and includes it in the planning for admission and enrollment to ensure the goal is met.
- The AVPGE commended the program's approach to monitor enrollment, and recommended its approach to sustain enrollment and support student success as a model for other programs on campus.

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2. Continued curriculum and program improvement:
 - The external reviewers recommended the program to ensure clear alignment and description of how the program's mission statement is consistent with each element of the profession's purpose and values.
 - The program is recommended to further explore ways to ensure that the MSW curriculum does not repeat what has been achieved in students' baccalaureate social work programs. The Chair acknowledged and reported that work is under way to provide additional options such as an "advanced standing pathway" for students who have already completed their BSW.
3. Assessment:
 - While commending the program's assessment practice, the external reviewers recommended the program to consider revising assessment methods and procedures for competencies 4 and 5 to ensure continuous effectiveness, reliability, and validity of the assessment practice.
 - The AVPGE and the SAVPIEP both echoed the best practices demonstrated through the program's assessment effort, and at the same time, encouraged the program to explore ways to simplify the process for long-term sustainability.
 - The external reviewers also recommended that, although the program has inclusion and retention efforts in place, it should continue to grow those efforts and ensure the impact of those efforts can be demonstrated.
4. Faculty hiring:
 - The Chair stated that the program will need to search for a T/TT position in 2025-26 to replace a faculty member who is currently on FERP. The program currently has one T/TT search to prepare for the program expansion, which is grant funded for the first three years.
 - The Chair reported that CSWE accreditation requires a faculty/student ratio of 12:1. The program is currently out of compliance at 13:1. As the program continues to expand enrollment (increasing by 15 students per year for the next three years), faculty hiring needs to keep up accordingly to meet accreditation requirements.
 - The Dean and the Provost expressed understanding and support for the need.
5. Self-support Social Work program:
 - The Chair asked for support to determine the profit sharing situation of the self-support Social Work program. The program relies on the funding for faculty travel and for professional development. The program's impression is that the profit sharing has not occurred for the last five years, though there could be reasons for why the funding has not received the program itself.
 - The faculty shared that this fund is also important to support students in capstone courses to present at conferences. Such activities are excellent opportunities to support the pipeline for PhD programs and to increase the diversity of students who pursue advanced degrees in Social Work.

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- The Provost acknowledge the need to investigate this issue further, and recommended a meeting between the program, EIP and the Provost's Office to examine the budget, enrollment, and projection for HHD self-support programs.

The Dean commended the program for having high quality and cooperative faculty who are willing to go above and beyond to support students and the university. The Provost concluded the meeting by thanking the current and previous Chairs for their leadership and hardwork. The Chairs expressed appreciatin for the Provost's support.