

# Institutional Effectiveness Report

## Assessment Summary

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**Department or Division:** Social Work

**Degree Program:** Master of Social Work

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**Assessment Cycle** (*academic or calendar year*): Academic Year

**Mission** (*related to VSU mission*): To supply competent professional social workers who are prepared to engage in advanced, independent practice using specialized knowledge, skills, theories, and methods, and who are able to contribute and shape the overall social work practice environment (Goal 1).

**Assessment History** (*discuss here how and when the program developed its current assessment program, what it used prior to starting that program to assess its effectiveness, etc.*):

The Master of Social Work (MSW) Program began in 1995. All degreed social work programs must be accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and the MSW program at Valdosta State University (VSU) received its initial accreditation in 1998 and was Reaffirmed in 2002. From its inception, the MSW Program has maintained a list of program and curriculum objectives. These objectives state what we expect students to be able to do when they have completed the curriculum. However, the list of objectives and the measurement of the objectives have undergone continuous development over the years, based on changes in the standards of CSWE. Likewise, as the program, university, community, and region have grown and expanded, there have been substantive programmatic changes.

**Phase I: 1994-1998. Initial period of program development characterized by:**

- Curriculum construction
- Development of program objectives
- Initial development of measures of program effectiveness
- Primitive measurement that was global, based on impressions and qualitative subjectivity
- Use of several rapid assessment instruments in pre- and post conditions to evaluate student development.

During this period, the program developed its initial curriculum with a list of program objectives and developed a curriculum to deliver the objectives. At that time, the major measures of curriculum effectiveness included: a) GPA; b) evaluation of student performance in field practicum; c) the Final Concentration Portfolio; and d) selected rapid assessment instruments given to students as they entered the MSW Program and graduated. We found that field instructors had difficulty in giving precise ratings for field practicum objectives and tended to inflate grades of student performance similar to the grade inflation in classes that we found during this period. Attempts to use rapid assessment instruments were marked with problems from the beginning. At the time, we did not have the resources to track the data adequately. Also, the instruments themselves did not accurately capture the program objectives. At the time of initial accreditation, CSWE did not focus on measuring program effectiveness. Instead, the major focus was on the coherence of the curriculum in relation to our goals and objectives and whether the essential pieces were in place.

**Phase II, 1998-2002 – Pre-Accreditation Period characterized by:**

- Fining tuning of program objectives and alignment of curriculum
- Aligning measures with program objectives and program logic
- Attempts to refine portfolio through the use of capstone assignments
- Outcome measures still based on subjective global impressions and qualitative data
- Attempts to refine student practicum evaluations.

During this period, the program continued to assess its educational effectiveness primarily through the use of traditional classroom grading, a *Concentration Portfolio*, and the formal assessment of student performance in a supervised and structured practicum, the *Final Concentration Learning Plan*. The Field Practicum is considered as the “signature pedagogy” of professional social work programs and can be seen as human service laboratories in which students work directly and indirectly with clients, applying skills and knowledge that are learned in the classroom. This integration is conducted under the supervision of an established professional with an MSW degree, and a faculty liaison from the MSW Program. Both the portfolio and formal assessment of field performance assess educational effectiveness based on the achievement of established curriculum objectives. Objectives for the first year or foundation year are mandated by CSWE. However, the emphasis at this time was more on establishing procedures for the assessment and their relation to the logic of the program rather than the rigor of the assessment procedures. Only moderate attention was given to rigor in measurement. The measures were primarily *ipsitive*, and field instructors and liaisons rated student practicum performance primarily on their clinical impressions. Attempts to improve the global ratings were done through the establishment of practicum-based outcomes for the program objectives. Although the portfolio emphasized the use of identifiable *capstone assignments* that were explicitly linked to program objectives in the 2002 CSWE Self-Study, students were permitted to choose specific assignments that best reflected their achievements. Ratings of the portfolio by faculty advisors were exclusively qualitative. Although the final portfolio, as well as the SOWK 7612 Final Field Evaluation occurred at the time of graduation, they also were evaluated at semester intervals.

**Phase III, 2003-2006 – Post-Accreditation Period characterized by:**

- Program expansion and extension of existing measures
- Attention to rigor in existing measures
- Measurement of equivalency of FTF and online program
- Expansion of data collection
- Development of process measures

The CSWE re-affirmation cycle lasts 8 years. During the first 4 years, attention was focused on the expansion of data collection procedures and attention to increasing the rigor of existing measures. Concurrent with expansion of data collection was program expansion. We instituted an online hybrid program in which students did at least half of their work in online course platforms. This change in program delivery required the assessment of program equivalency along with greater attention to measurement rigor. In regard to rigor, we instituted grade distribution (GPA) profiles for each faculty. These provided a picture of where grade inflation, as well as rigorous grading, occurred. These profiles were tied to faculty annual evaluations. We developed a rating instrument to use with the Student Portfolio. The instrument was a Likert-type scale used to rate student attention to achievement of the program objectives as organized in seven discrete sections of the portfolio. Faculty members were trained on the use of the instrument. However, students were free to choose curriculum artifacts to include in the portfolio to show that they had achieved each of the seven program outcomes. Achievement in the portfolio continued to use aggregate measures such as completed assignments and practicum tasks. Similar procedures, including more rigorous training of the field instructors in student assessment, were developed and deployed for the field practicum assessment.

Expansion of data collection included the following: a) Alumni Survey of program relevance and program impact; b) Exit Survey of graduating students; c) Focus groups for graduating students; d) Establishment and tracking of GPA deficiency points which can result in program dismissal; e) Attempts to track licensing data of graduates; and f) implementation of the MSW Student Code of Conduct, a professional comportment checklist of expected professional behaviors, which was used to identify problematic professional conduct of students. The Exit Surveys and Focus Groups

were used primarily to assure that the online program was equivalent to the face-to-face program. GPA comparisons also were used for this purpose. Professional social work has two levels of licensure, Licensed Master of Social Work and Licensed Clinical Social Work. It is assumed that when graduates pass either level of licensure, they are equipped to practice. We attempted to track licensure by having graduates report success in licensing and through the alumni survey. Results were mixed, as this data is hard to acquire. A small proportion of graduates responded to these requests, but it is doubtful that the data provide a true picture of licensure.

Process measures were instituted to attempt to point toward areas in the curriculum that were problematic and areas of program strength, as well as a focus on curriculum coherence and deployment. These measures included continued periodic review of all course syllabi by the Curriculum Committee. Transparency Tuesdays required faculty to present their course syllabi to their faculty peers and to discuss the teaching methods that they used. The entire faculty engaged in a process of joint evaluation and helpful suggestions were made by faculty. Likewise, there was a periodic peer review of teaching effectiveness.

**Phase IV, 2007-Present.** Based on a mandate from CSWE and the evaluation of previous data, in 2007 the faculty determined that previous evaluation procedures needed more rigor and organization. The major distinction between the latest evaluation process and previous evaluations was that previous methods allowed for the evaluation of individual student achievement, but were insufficient for aggregate purposes. The new focus needed to target the evaluation of the program's effectiveness in meeting its objectives, and ultimately, the evaluation of program impact. This change led to a major revision of the entire evaluation process as well a change in the instruments used in evaluation. This revision has now been completed and a complete data set, based on the changes, will not be available until May 2009. Data collected for 2007-2008 are based on the old model.

**Current Revision characterized by:**

- Consolidation of measures of program effectiveness into an organized and comprehensive model of program evaluation
- Direct alignment of all courses and course outcomes under program objectives
- Dis-aggregation of all course assignments and evaluative measures so that they explicitly and directly measure course outcomes
- Re-structuring of the Alumni Survey to reflect the program objectives and outcome indicators and to evaluate the relevance of the program and effectiveness in meeting the program objectives
- Re-structuring of *Concentration Portfolio* to reflect attainment of selected course outcomes, using dis-aggregated course measures.
- Complete overhaul of the assessment tool used to evaluate student performance in the field in order to more rigorously measure student performance at the time of graduation
- Training of field instructors and faculty in the measurement of outcome achievement in the practicum
- Development of a *truncated facsimile* of the Licensing Examination to use as a pre and post measure of fitness to practice.

In 2007, CSWE changed its accreditation emphasis to that of outcome measurement. All social work programs were instructed to measure student achievement through more direct measurement of program curriculum objectives, the use of explicit outcomes for courses and practicum, and more accurate outcome measures – beyond GPA – that better reflected attainment of outcomes. Although the *Concentration Portfolio* and the *Final Concentration Learning Plan* continue to be integral in measuring program effectiveness, the mandated changes necessitated a re-structuring of program objectives, curriculum, and more direct alignment of course outcomes and measures with program objectives. Additionally, the mandate required consolidation of all measures into an organized and comprehensive approach to program evaluation. The current period was marked by the development of more precise and rigorous measures of outcomes for curriculum and practicum, the organization and consolidation of our evaluation methods into a comprehensive model, and the emphasis of triangulation to measure student achievement. During this period the major standard imposed on all measures and data was: 1) How are the data relevant to program effectiveness? 2) Can the data be used efficiently? 3) How can the data be used to effectively improve the program? These changes have

limited the amount of data that has been collected thus far. We expect to have our first complete data set available by May, 2009.

### **Assessment Results from 2005-2008**

**Expected Student Learning Outcomes used from 1998-2007.** *(These learning outcomes are mandated by CSWE, yet they also reflect the unique curriculum emphasis of each MSW Program).*

1. Demonstrate the ability to use an open selection of theories, congruent with biopsychosocial variables that effect human behavior, that are organized within and congruent with the ecological perspective in the service of understanding transactions among systems at all levels (individuals, families, groups, organization and communities) as well as informing possible interventions with said systems.
2. Demonstrate knowledge, skills, practice, and values of the advanced generalist based on the liberal arts foundation on (i.e., history, biology, sociology, psychology, and arts) and evidenced by increased competence in communications skills, critical thinking skills, as well as the synthesis and integration of both classroom content and field experiences.
3. Demonstrate the ability to engage in and appropriately use social work supervision and consultation as a guide for advanced generalist practice.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of and an ability to conduct advanced generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
5. Understand and interpret the history and development of the profession as it relates to current structures and trends; particularly as it relates to the development of social work practice as a contact sensitive endeavor.
6. Building on the foundation knowledge of the philosophical, political, ideological and historical background of the development of social welfare policies, programs, and services in this country, show ability to propose policies to improve social and economic conditions.
7. Demonstrate the ability to understand, utilize, develop, manage, and coordinate human service networks in order to improve service delivery to rural client populations.
8. Demonstrate an increased ability to apply culturally sensitive practice theory and methods to persons of diverse cultures including those of differing sexual orientation, religion, and gender, persons from both urban and rural areas; those who are differently challenged; people of color; and especially those who are vulnerable to poverty, oppression or discrimination.
9. Demonstrate independent implementation of the problem-solving process with systems at multiple levels, intervening in increasingly complex situations with special attention to factors that impact rural communities.
10. Demonstrate the ability to communicate as professionals in a manner that is increasingly clear, succinct, and appropriate both in written and verbal form with multiple systems as well as the ability<sup>7</sup> to understand context-sensitive communication processes.
11. Demonstrate an integrated application of the diverse roles, skills, practice methods, and theories at the disposal of the advanced generalist practitioner. This refers specifically to the ability to differentiate and deploy all of the above in a timely manner within and across settings and levels.
12. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate, apply, and engage in the orderly conduct of appropriate research methods across multiple system levels, including the evaluation of programs and one's own practice.
13. Demonstrate the increasing ability for self-awareness as a reflective practitioner including an awareness and an ability to control for one's biases in relation to culturally competent, professional use of self.
14. Demonstrate the ability to apply the values and ethics of the social work profession, in increasingly complex situations, to all aspects of multilevel practice with diverse populations.
15. Demonstrate an understanding of rurality and specific rural conditions as a context for advanced generalist practice.
16. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills of improving conditions of people from diverse backgrounds including persons of diverse cultures, differing sexual and political orientation, religion and gender, those who are differently challenged; people of color, and especially persons who are vulnerable to poverty, oppression, discrimination or social differences.
17. To provide students with knowledge, skills, and innovative opportunities for critical thinking and to

enhance personal and professional development through continuing education, training, mentoring, and supervision.

## 2005-2006 ACADEMIC YEAR

**Assessments** (include when and to whom these are administered, and align goals with specific assessments):

### **Concentration Portfolio** ([See Dataset](#))

The Concentration Portfolio includes seven areas or outcomes, and each area is linked to one or more Concentration Program Objectives. Although several dimensions of each area are evaluated by faculty advisors in order to grade the portfolio, two were selected for this analysis. These areas include Thoroughness and Relevance.

Area 1 = measured by Concentration Program Objectives (CPO) 2, 4, 9, 12

A2 = CPO 1, 11

A3= CPO 8, 16

A4 =CPO 3, 10, 13

A5= CPO 2

A6 =CPO 5, 14

A7= CPO 7

### **Discussion/dissemination of Results:**

All graduating students completed the portfolio successfully. Two dimensions of the portfolio were examined, Thoroughness and Relevance. Using a 5-point, Likert-type scale, the overall mean for Thoroughness in all areas was 3.9 (sd. .66) with scores ranging from 2.86 to 5. Thoroughness refers to the degree to which students addressed each particular area. We interpreted the lower scores that emerged this year as suggesting an increase in the rigor of grading on the part of faculty. The two CPOs with the lowest mean scores dealt with diversity and cultural sensitivity, CPO 8 & 16 ( $x=3.8$ ) and the historical roots and ethics of the profession, CPO 5 & 14 ( $x=3.8$ ). The overall mean for Relevance in all areas was 3.8 ( $sd=.66$ ). Relevance refers to the extent to which the evidence that students presented was germane to the portfolio area and gave a valid representation of their achievement. Again, the lowest area involved the historical roots and ethics of the profession, CPO 5 & 14 ( $x=3.73$ ).

**Modifications Made:** Although the faculty remained dissatisfied with the portfolio project, this item was referred to the Curriculum Committee for ongoing discussion.

### **Concentration Learning Plan** ([See Dataset](#))

There are 12 learning outcomes in the Concentration Learning Plan for the second year. These 12 contain the 17 program objectives. Each of the 12 outcomes contains several items that are averaged into a mean for each student on the outcome. This allows us to analyze the data more closely for each outcome if we choose. Although individualized learning plans are completed and used to evaluate student progress at the end of each semester in field, it is during the final semester of the concentration year in which students must demonstrate that they have achieved a basic mastery of all program outcomes as they are applied to social work practice.

**Discussion/Dissemination of Results:** In 2006, student means on each of the 12 field outcomes ranged from 4.12 to 4.7. The range for each of the 12 outcomes was narrow and toward the upper limit which suggested that field instructors may provide overly optimistic appraisals of students. Furthermore, faculty members reported that many field instructors had not completed these forms during final field meetings. Some promised to mail them in, but this did not happen. As a result, there are evaluations for only one-third of

graduates for the year. Faculty members express the opinion that the Concentration Learning Plan is not a sound reflection and measure of student performance. When examining the data, many faculty members also stated that their efforts to encourage field instructors to grade more rigorously are not effective. For next year, no changes will be made, but as Reaffirmation approaches, the entire instrument will be revised and ongoing field training will emphasize rigor in grading.

**Modifications Made:**

None. We will continue to train field instructors to evaluate students more rigorously.

**Graduate Exit Interviews and Focus Group Data** ([See Dataset](#); also see Attachment A for a paper copy)

For the past few years, focus groups of graduates have been convened and graduates have been asked a set of questions regarding the program. Additionally, all graduates have been asked to complete an Exit Survey which includes quantitative measures.

**Discussion/Dissemination of Results:** Results were presented to the faculty at the annual Fall 2006 Faculty Workday. During 2005-2006, the first cohort of web students completed the 3-year MSW Program. Thus, feedback from this graduating cohort was deemed to be especially important, as the faculty was particularly interested in web and face to face program equivalency. The faculty wanted to determine the two program groups were equivalent or whether an equivalent program was being presented using two different instructional methods. Few differences emerged between the two program cohorts suggesting equivalence.

The faculty examined the data, defined areas of program problems and strength, and targeted programmatic changes that needed to be made. Qualitative data from the Exit Interviews and Focus Groups indicated that students were extremely dissatisfied with the *Concentration Portfolio*. Students noted frustration with both the process through which portfolios were constructed (managed by Faculty Advisors) as well as the variation across advisors in their demands for rewrites and variations in grading. Additionally, Focus Group data revealed some substantial student concerns about dishonesty among students, and the faculty actually identified several instances of cheating and dishonesty in classes and in field.

**Modifications Made:** In the following year, we decided to focus increased attention on ethics within the curriculum and within the overall program. With feedback from faculty, the Director decided to develop a comprehensive *MSW Student Code of Conduct* (2006) which presented standards of behavior and standards of professionalism expected of all MSW graduate students. All beginning MSW students received an orientation on the Code of Conduct during their initial Orientation, and prior to their starting classes they were asked to sign the Code, stating that they had heard the presentation about the Code of Conduct, had read the Code, and that they agreed to comply with all standards on the Code of Conduct.

Because of the consistent level of dissatisfaction with the Final Concentration Portfolio, several major changes were made in this area as well. The decision was made to move to an electronic portfolio, similar to portfolios that are used in the College of Education. Dr. Ellen Wiley and Dr. Jane Zahner scheduled a workshop for social work faculty in which focused on portfolio construction and assisted the faculty in applying this type of process to social work students. The faculty decided to incorporate the portfolio construction process into a class, the Practicum Seminar (SOWK 7630), which is focused on students' transition into practice. The course instructor, Dr. Cindy Tandy, defined a process by which portfolio construction was taught in her courses, using the software, Adobe. The role of academic advisors was to evaluate the final product. The faculty hoped that standardization of the process would decrease student dissatisfaction.

There were also complaints from students in both the web and face to face cohorts that there was too much "busy work". Students also complained that they wanted higher standards in all courses, better use of in-class

time, and more consistency in the application of academic standards for all students. There was a significant dissatisfaction with the portfolio project, as noted above. These student concerns were referred to the Curriculum Committee to be addressed. Likewise, members of the faculty began to examine their own courses individually as well as collectively in order to weigh the implications of excessive “busy work”.

### ***Faculty Productivity in the Division of Social Work, 2005-2006***

Total Faculty Presentations at Professional Meetings: 35

Total Faculty Community and National Service Roles/Responsibilities: 58

Total Amount of Grant Activity: \$397,947

Total Refereed Journal Articles: 10

Total Faculty Service to Valdosta State University: 43

### **Discussion/Dissemination of Results:**

Results indicated a consistent level of scholarship and service among the faculty, particularly in the number of state and national juried presentations. Likewise, there appeared to be a significantly high number of service activities conducted by the faculty.

### **Modifications Made:**

Faculty members were encouraged to continue their high level of productivity, but emphasis was made on increasing of faculty scholarship. No changes were made. The Division continues to seek additional grant funding opportunities, and a decision was made to expand the Title IV-E Project to include 25 MSW students.

## **2006-2007**

### **Assessment Results**

### ***Concentration Portfolio* ([See Dataset](#))**

The Concentration Portfolio includes seven areas or outcomes, and each area is linked to one or more Concentration Program Objectives. Although several dimensions of each area are evaluated by the faculty in order to grade the overall portfolio, two were included in this analysis, Thoroughness and Relevance.

Measures:

Area 1 = CPO 2, 4, 9, 12

A2 = CPO 1, 11

A3= CPO 8, 16

A4 =CPO 3, 10, 13

A5= CPO 2

A6 =CPO 5, 14

A7= CPO 7

### **Discussion/Dissemination of Results:**

This was the year in which electronic portfolios were implemented. All student portfolios received a Satisfactory rating. However, in moving to electronic portfolios, the Division failed to create a sustainable electronic duplicate adaptation of the actual portfolio grading sheet. Despite including the original in the student versions of electronic portfolios, we did not save electronic duplicates. As a result, we have no quantitative portfolio data to analyze for May 2007. Qualitative data from the Exit Survey indicated that students preferred the electronic process. However, the change did not impact students’ satisfaction levels. Student complaints grew and tended to focus more on disparities in the process of portfolio completion, and particularly, variations in grades across advisors.

**Modifications Made:** After receiving a second year of extremely negative feedback, it was clear to the faculty that the change to an electronic portfolio did not fully address the source of student dissatisfaction. It became

clear that variation in the responses of advisors during portfolio completion and variation in advisor's grading standards were major factors. At this point, we decided to make substantial changes to the *Concentration Portfolio* and to restructure this as a capstone project. This issue was referred to the faculty to be worked on as a part of the overall process of curriculum evaluation that would be completed in preparation for Reaffirmation. In Spring 2007, the faculty began work on a radical revision of the overall evaluation process (see Section "Description of the Revised Model" below). Because the changes were projected to extend over two years, the faculty maintained the current Concentration Portfolio (electronic) for the 2007-2008 academic year, realizing that student dissatisfaction was likely to continue.

### **Concentration Learning Plan Evaluations** ([See Dataset](#))

Only one-third of the final Learning Plan Evaluations was returned. Results were similar to those of the previous year with means ranging slightly lower ( $x = 4.05$  to  $4.32$ ) than in 2006. However, *post hoc* analyses indicated no significant differences from the previous year on any of the final field outcomes.

### **Discussion/Dissemination of Results**

The faculty increasingly expressed their frustration with students in field practicum who received higher grades in practicum than the faculty felt that they deserved. There were several incidents that emerged in field agencies in which a faculty liaison's evaluation of a student was lower than the evaluation provided by the on-site field instructor. Faculty became aware that the field evaluation process focused on global perceptions of the student by the field instructor rather than goal attainment scaling that was anchored to outcomes framed and stated, by the field instructors, in observable behaviors. In general, practicum students were being evaluated on indirect outcomes which involved a summative score of the students' practice skills rather than the required, specific performance of behaviorally-specific skills. The *Concentration Learning Plan* was providing an unanchored, Likert-type scale, in which expected outcomes were not tied in any way with observable behaviors. The faculty determined that the entire *Concentration Learning Plan* needed to be modified prior to Reaffirmation.

**Modifications Made:** In spring of 2007, the faculty began work on a radical revision of the overall evaluation process. Despite the faculty's dissatisfaction with the results of final *Concentration Learning Plan*, the faculty resisted the impulse to change the form until they determined how the Concentration Learning Plan would fit in the revised evaluation structure. Revisions were scheduled to be made in during the curriculum revision of 2007-2008. When the revised *Concentration Learning Plan* has been implemented during the 2008-2009 academic year, initial data will be available in May, 2009.

### **Graduate Exit Interview & Focus Group Data** ([See Dataset](#))

Both Graduate Exit Interview and Focus Group data were collected for graduates of the MSW Program. Results were presented to the faculty by the Director at the Fall 2007 Faculty Workday. As was done previously, several hours were set aside to examine the data, determine areas of program strength and weakness, and identify programmatic and curriculum changes. The faculty continued to express concern as to whether there were significant differences between the web and on-campus cohorts. In essence, the faculty was hopeful that the differences between the two cohorts would be minimal, thus affirming the similarity of the two cohorts.

**Discussion/Dissemination of Results:** Regarding the cohort comparison, few differences emerged between cohorts of web and face-to-face students. Likewise, few differences were seen between African American and Caucasian students. The pattern of a lack of significant differences across these groups was similar to the 2006 survey and provided further evidence of program equivalence. Students reported that they felt respected in the MSW Program, supported by staff and faculty, given quality feedback and professional development information, and given good role models in terms of the faculty. Advanced standing students reported feelings of isolation in the MSW Program that were exacerbated because they had not been in the MSW



Program during their foundation year. Students strongly agreed that the program was what they expected, and that they could apply what they learned to practice. All students liked the level of support by the faculty. One African American student commented that she would like to see more faculty members “like herself”. One student critiqued the unevenness in instructor skills and instructors’ ability to use Web-ct as an instructional platform.

**Modifications Made:**

As a result of the feedback, increased attention was focused on the needs of transitioning Advanced Standing (AS) students into the MSW Program, particularly during their first semester. A formal orientation for this group was instituted and was conducted by the staff and the director. The Director assumed the role of academic advisor for AS students and helped to prepare them academically and in other ways for entry into the program. Increased attention was given to issues of diversity, and director began an initiative to increase the number of diverse part-time instructors. Additionally, attention was given to faculty’s unevenness in on-line instructional skills. Faculty members were made aware of on-line campus support, and two training workshops were held to assist faculty in online course construction and methods of teaching on-line including syllabus construction. These courses were taught by an expert in on-line teaching, Jon Sizemore, Director of VSU’s Hub. Dr. Cindy Tandy also offered to work with faculty course construction in on-line courses. Transparency Tuesdays, curriculum meetings in which faculty member’s on-line courses were presented, also enabled faculty to talk more openly about on-line teaching problems and to enhance one’s skills through discussions of course syllabi and teaching methods.

There was renewed emphasis on cross-cohort socialization among students, and there were an increased number of social gatherings for students. These gatherings were held on web weekends so as to maximize the attendance of cohorts of students. Likewise, there have been an increased number of service projects available for students.

***Division of Social Work Academic Data, 2006-2007***

Total Faculty Presentations at Professional Meetings: 31

Total Faculty Community and National Service Roles/Responsibilities: 41

Total Amount of Grant Activity: \$429,947

Total Refereed Journal Articles: 13

Total Faculty Service Roles to Valdosta State University: 34

**Discussion/Dissemination of Results:**

Results indicated a continuing, high level of faculty scholarship and productivity. Faculty service levels were somewhat lower this year, but the difference can be explained by the loss of one full-time, tenure track family member and one temporary faculty member. There was an increase in the total amount of grant activity as well as the number of grants.

**Modifications Made:** Faculty will be encouraged to continue their high level of productivity. There were three additional juried journal articles published during the year.

**2007-2008**

*Because no major curriculum changes were made during the 2007-2008 academic year, it is hypothesized that data from the year will be similar to results from prior years. Major curriculum changes were initiated in August, 2008.*

**Concentration Portfolio ([See Datafile](#))**

**Discussion/Dissemination of Results:** Because of the overall curriculum changes and realignment, no major changes were made in the Concentration Portfolio for 2008.

**Modifications Made:** Because the electronic portfolio format did not resolve students' global dissatisfaction with portfolios, the plan to alter the portfolio assignment was included as a part of the overall curriculum evaluation to be completed before Reaffirmation. The changes were projected to extend over two years, and the faculty maintained the same *Concentration Portfolio* for the 2007-2008 academic year, realizing that student dissatisfaction would continue. New data will be available in May, 2009.

#### **Concentration Learning Plan ([See Datafile](#))**

Because of the consistently poor data that emerged from previous student scores on the *Concentration Learning Plan*, the faculty determined the *Concentration Learning Plan* likewise was in need of major revision.

**Discussion/Dissemination of Results:** The revised *Concentration Learning Plan* was implemented during August of the 2008-2009, and analysis of the results will be available in May, 2009.

**Modifications Made:** Results of the revised Concentration Learning Plan will be available in May, 2009.

#### **Graduate Exit Interview & Focus Group Data ([See Dataset](#))**

Exit Interview and Focus Group Data were presented at the Fall Faculty Workshop as in previous years.

**Discussion/Dissemination of Results:** Several changes were made in the format of the Exit Interview for the year. Because of the time demands of Reaffirmation, the faculty decided that we would not hold focus groups this year. For the first time, we created electronic surveys that could be completed anonymously. Many faculty believed that there were too many qualitative questions, and as a result, we reduced this number to three, asking students what they liked about the program, what they disliked, and what they would like to change. Faculty also felt that some of the Exit Interview questions contained a negative bias and focused more on eliciting complaints than a broader range of feedback. We attempted to edit the more negatively biased questions and to shift the focus more toward educational outcomes, preparation for practice, and satisfaction with a range of aspects of their MSW experience.

In general, students reported that they were highly satisfied with the program, made changes in their lives and work to be able to pursue the program, would attend again, felt that faculty were supportive, felt that the staff are supportive, felt faculty were willing to provide extra assistance, found professional models in field instructors, felt respected in the program, were challenged academically and professionally, were satisfied with field placements, developed good relationships with peers, felt the program was relevant, and were confident and prepared for practice. They were in strong agreement that they were challenged personally, the field practicum was important, and that they could apply what they learned. Again, there were similar ratings between web students and face to face students in their ratings. However, there were some significant differences: web students reported a higher mean of feeling respected, a higher overall level of satisfaction with the program, were satisfied with the cost of attending, and were more sure that they would attend again. Students still reported that there was too much "busy work", the program needed to be more challenging, and they recommended keeping standards consistent across all classes. The issue of faculty showing favoritism was mentioned several times although the issue of ethical problems was not raised. Since some of these issues had emerged previously, the faculty decided to address these issues through curriculum change.

**Modifications Made:** Much of this data is similar to data from the previous two years. This year, there are a few significant differences between the web and face to face cohorts. In the face to face cohort, there were a series of differences that emerged between the students and an instructor, and obviously, the conflict was never completely resolved. Because these negative interactions occurred immediately prior to graduation, the conflict emerged in the satisfaction scores. There were other themes that had emerged in previous data including the theme of “busy work”, more challenging coursework as well as consistency, and these important concerns were referred to the Curriculum Committee to be addressed organizationally through strengthening the curriculum. New data will be analyzed in May, 2009.

#### ***Division of Social Work Academic Data, 2007-2008***

Total Faculty Presentations at Professional Meetings: 27

Total Faculty Community and National Service Roles/Responsibilities: 53

Total Amount of Grant Activity: \$480,887

Total Refereed Journal Articles: 13

Total Faculty Service Roles to Valdosta State University: 35

#### **Discussion/Dissemination of Results:**

The Division of Social Work continues consistently to be productive in scholarship and active in making various national, state, and community presentations. The number of articles accepted to refereed journals remained consistent for the second year. The total amount of funded grants increased markedly during the year. The Division continues to be involved in a grant to support the work of the Alzheimer’s Day Care Center, *My Friend’s House*, as well as grants that support MSW education for child welfare student-employees. Additionally, there are other grants to support collaborative work with the State of Georgia Division of Child and Family Services.

#### **Modifications Made:**

Faculty members are encouraged to continue their high levels of productivity. No changes were made. The Division continues to seek additional grant funding and opportunities for external collaboration with other agencies.

#### **2008 Alumni Survey ([See Dataset](#))**

Collection of this data is currently in progress, and spans the old and revised curriculum.

In 2007-2008, we began work on revising our program objectives so that they reflected the institutional drift of our curriculum. By drift we refer to the many ad hoc changes we made in curriculum based on the changing social work environment, changes at VSU, as well as feedback from students, field instructors and social workers. In looking at our curriculum in 2007-2008, we found that we had moved away from some of our program objectives while adding other elements. Most salient among these was a move away from *rurality* as a defining characteristic of our program, and we had begun to include *professional leadership*. These changes were most noticeable in the concentration year. As a method of exploring the validity of these changes, we piloted a survey of our alumni that reflected these new program objectives. Thus far we have received 45 responses to the surveys to date. There were 19 revised curriculum program objectives; 14 in the foundation year and 5 additional ones in the concentration year. Each program objective had at least one item and some of the concentration objectives had as many as 15 items. Alumni were asked to rate each item using a five point Likert type scale. There were two dimensions per item; the degree to which the alumnus or alumna believed that the MSW curriculum had prepared them on each item and the degree that they thought the item had relevance to their professional social work.

#### **Discussion/Dissemination of Results:**

### **Results of this limited sample supported the changes we made in the curriculum**

Because we did not alter our foundation year in a significant way, we anticipated that alumni would see themselves at least “well-prepared” on our foundation program objectives. For all but one of the 14 program foundation objectives, this was true. Means for the 13 ranged from 4.18 to 4.76. Only program objective 9 which asked how well-prepared respondents were to analyze and formulate social policies averaged below “well-prepared” ( $x = 3.95$ ). Relevance scores on the foundation objectives ranged from 3.62 to 4.7. All but two of our foundation objectives were considered as “very relevant” to professional practice. The two which fell below “very relevant” were FPOs 7 and 10 which referred to students’ understanding the history/trends of the profession and applying research findings to practice.

With regard to the concentration objectives, strong support was found for the level of preparation and the degree of relevance for all but one of our five concentration program objectives. Only the program objective that referred to leadership and the ability to shape ones professional environment fell below a mean score of four on both preparation ( $x = 3.93$ ) and relevance ( $x = 3.8$ ). The lower score on preparation is not surprising in that curricular emphasis on leadership was informal prior to this revision. Of some concern is the lower rating on the relevance of leadership to our alumni. Although the rating suggests that they consider leadership relevant, the difference is significantly lower than the others. We believe the data gathered thus far provide a beginning endorsement of our changes in our curriculum program objectives. We plan to continue circulating our alumnae survey and use it to assess our program impact.

#### **Modifications Made:**

Continue Survey data collection. Proceed with new program objectives and operationalize them in the course and practicum.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE REVISED MODEL FOR EVALUATION OF THE M.S.W. PROGRAM**

Data is now being collected for 2008-2009

Ultimately, the goal of the MSW program at VSU is to supply competent professional social workers to the region and beyond, who are capable of advanced and independent practice, using specialized skills, theories and methods, and who can contribute to and shape the overall practice environment. This goal requires some measurement of the impact of the program on the practice environment, measurement of the competence and preparation of our graduating students at the time of graduation based on how well they have met the program objectives (as measured by outcomes for each program objective and the internal and regular evaluation of our program inputs and activities and their delivery). The evaluation of the three areas occurs at three different system levels:

1. What happens to the practice community and graduates as a result of our program – program relevance and impact?
2. What happens to the students when they are in our program and at graduation – student achievement?
3. What happens to the curriculum when it is deployed in the program - coherence, congruity, integrity and effectiveness?

The three parts of our program evaluation attempt to answer the following three questions:

1. Is the program effective in meeting the needs of the social work practice community?(Evaluation of

program impact)

2. Are students achieving the outcomes suggested in the curriculum program objectives? (Curriculum outcome evaluation )
3. Is the curriculum being delivered in a way that maximizes the accomplishment of numbers 1 & 2? (Process evaluation)

### Explanation of the three levels and data collection methods

1. **Evaluation of program impact. Is the program effective in meeting the needs of the social work practice community?** We believe that competent and productive alumni are the litmus test for a program's effectiveness. As we have developed the MSW Program over the years, our presence in a historically rural region and the lack of social workers in the region have allowed us to remain in close communication with alumni. They have provided regular feedback to us through their work as field instructors and as advisory board members. They have been willing to maintain intermittent contact and feedback regarding their professional development. Their feedback has been used to add and modify elements to our program to include the following: the addition of a course on groups, restructuring of our elective courses, more emphasis on leadership, and importantly, the change of the practice environment from one that has been largely rural, to one that incorporates rapidly developing communities and rapidly dwindling resources as well as the continuing importance of an Advanced Generalist Approach to the curriculum.

In 2002, because of rapid program growth and the growth and emergence of a strong and viable practice community in South Georgia, we developed a 2008 Alumni Survey to evaluate our impact. We also have attempted to track licensure data for graduates, but tracking has proven quite difficult because variation in the timing at which graduates choose to become licensed. Because licensure is not consistently required in all types of human service agencies, many graduates do not pursue licensure until they accept a job in an agency which requires licensure. Based on the mandate from CSWE to measure program effectiveness based on program objectives and more discrete outcomes, the Division developed the 2008 Alumni Survey to evaluate: 1) the continuing relevance of our program objectives; and 2) the degree to which practitioners assess their preparation to carry forth the objectives of the MSW Program. We track these data annually, but we anticipate that major program changes that can be seen through patterns and trends, based on impact, will take 3 to 5 years to become apparent in the data. Presently, our data collection methods involve the following: a) 2008 Alumni Survey; b) continuing attempts to track graduate licensure (which has not yet been completed); c) Annual Faculty Productivity in scholarship and presentations; and d) Annual Faculty Productivity in service and grants. These methods will be evaluated in three year increments.

2. **Evaluation of program outcomes. Are students achieving the outcomes delineated in the curriculum program objectives?** Along with CSWE's emphasis on more direct evaluation of social work education based on program objectives and outcome achievement, we have concluded that global measures such as grades do not capture outcome achievement. Thus, we have radically revised the assessment of our two major assessment tools: the *Concentration Portfolio* and the *Concentration Learning Plan*. Further, we have added the use of a facsimile of the Social Work Licensure Examination as a secondary measure. Another secondary measure is our Exit Survey/Focus Groups of all MSW graduates which we have used for several years. Although self-evaluations are not always reliable and valid measures of outcomes, we have found that the survey aids in identifying weaker or problematic areas in the curriculum. Our premise is that a single measure of outcomes is inadequate in order to capture a

realistic evaluation of student achievement. Our emphasis in outcome evaluation is on triangulation, using two primary outcome measures and two secondary ones.

### **The PoCo Map Portfolio**

In order to assess the program's effectiveness in attaining our curriculum objectives, we have dissected all of our courses, employed course-based outcomes, and have assessed and aligned each course outcome based on its direct "fit" with a particular program objective. We have defined 19 program objectives: 15 are undertaken in the foundation year of the program and continued, with different outcomes in the concentration year. We have revised the concentration year objectives based on feedback from alumni and students, and we now have 5 concentration objectives that are added in the second year of the program. All course outcomes must be specific, and we have determined course-related behaviors, skills, and knowledge that operationalize the overall program objectives according to the elements of that program objective that should be achieved in each particular course. Along with aligning every course outcome under at least one program objective, we have dis-aggregated all assignment and test grades into discrete measures for each course outcome and have matched the assignment or test dimensions to the outcome which it measures. This map of the program is referred to as the ***Program Objective Course Outcome Map or PoCo Map***. The entire process of curriculum realignment and course revision has extended from December of 2007 until August of 2008. Each course syllabus now contains a course version of the PoCo Map. Additionally, students and field instructors are provided with the comprehensive PoCo Map. The PoCo Map refers only to courses, and practicum is not included. This complex process of curriculum realignment has been beneficial in several ways that are germane to outcome measurement. They are as follows:

1. Program objectives now circumscribe the allegiance of all course knowledge and skills to the curriculum rather than to instructor preferences and biases.
2. Students and faculty now have a visual graphic which reflects how each course operationalizes the program objectives using course outcomes.
3. Students and faculty now can see how each program objective is operationalized and explicitly measured at the course level.
4. Faculty and evaluators can assess the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum delivery system based on face validity of course outcomes in relation to each objective.
5. Specific program objectives can be assessed in terms of curricular completeness, based on the volume and relevance of course outcomes.
6. Students are able to "see" and assess their own progress in meeting program objectives over time based on course outcomes and their scores for each outcome.
7. Faculty and students can select a constellation of specific course outcomes that serve as indices of multi-course-related achievement toward each program objective.
8. Faculty can assess course-based achievement of the program objectives-at the time of graduation-using these PoCo Map indices as the basis for the Student Portfolio.
9. Aggregate cohort scores can be constructed annually on each program objective, using the PoCo Map portfolio. This will allow us to determine strengths and weaknesses in achieving the 19 program objectives from year to year
10. These indices can be strengthened or revised from year to year-using the PoCo Map which will allow for flexibility in either more intensive measurement of particular program objectives or more in-depth measurement of program objectives that are not being met..

### **The Concentration Learning Plan**

Based on the PoCo Map, a similar revision was conducted on the field practicum, as reflected in the *Concentration Learning Plan*. The major focus was on the evaluation of the field practicum experience. Outcomes for the 19 program objectives were revised. With a focus on developing performance-based field outcomes, the entire faculty engaged in this process under the supervision of the field director. Performance-based outcomes are different from course-based outcomes in that they are more complex and may involve several skills integrated into one outcome. Attention was given to establishing behavioral indicators for use as standards of achievement similar to those used in Goal Attainment Scaling. A 5-point Likert-type scale is used for this purpose with the mid-point being the base standard of achievement for each outcome. A training packet was developed for students, field instructors, and liaisons. An extensive orientation for field instructors and students has been conducted and will continue all year. Although evaluation will occur at the end of each semester, the final, major evaluation will occur at the time the student is ready to graduate from the MSW Program. The evaluation is conducted by the field instructor along with the liaison, using input from the student. Averages will be computed for each student on the 19 program objectives, and these data will be collated with portfolio data. The first data set will be analyzed in May, 2009, and results will be made available.

### ***The Simulated LCSW Licensure Examination***

Administration currently is in process. Because efforts to track the licensure status of graduates have not been helpful, we developed a simulation of the actual licensure examination. Although the simulation is a third as long as the actual licensure examination (50 out of 150 questions), questions were selected and examined by three independent raters as to the face validity and congruence with weighted factors on the licensing exam. Despite these efforts, the licensing simulation does not represent our 19 program objectives and is not a measure of these objectives. However, the exam is an accurate representation of the examination that beginning social workers must pass in order to achieve the status of Licensed Master of Social Work (LMSW). We chose to use the licensing simulation as secondary data that can be used to “point toward” program achievement, if our primary outcome data validate achievement. National benchmarks will be acquired from the national testing center to use as a standard of comparison. Data is not yet available.

### ***The Graduate Exit Survey – Exit Surveys (every year) and Focus Groups (every other year)***

Although this Survey is not a measure of outcome-based achievement, the Exit Survey offers insights into areas of curriculum strength as well as areas that students perceive need more work. Previously, the data have been used as secondary data. In this present analysis, the survey will be used to verify the primary data. Survey and Focus Groups will be collected at the end of the academic year.

- 3. Process evaluation and CQA. Is the curriculum being delivered in a way that maximizes the accomplishment of numbers 1 & 2?** The goal of our ongoing process evaluation of the curriculum is to determine and insure that the curriculum is being delivered in such a way as to maximize the potential for achievement of our curriculum program objectives. This is done with a number of different evaluation methods (most of which are qualitative) including:

- Doctoral focus groups
- SSWAG survey

- Ongoing review of syllabi and modifications (curriculum committee) TQI
- Transparency Tuesday (curriculum committee) TQI
- Review of student course feedback (director – curriculum committee) TQI
- Graduate exit focus groups (director) PE
- Field instructor focus groups
- Peer evaluation of teaching (faculty) PE
- # of faculty successfully engaged in promotion and tenure process (faculty) PE
- Review of elements of alumni survey data PE
- Faculty sub-committee focus groups that synthesize and deploy conclusions from data above, then recommend to cc. (curriculum committee) TQI
- Annual evaluations of faculty (director)
- Ongoing consultation with social work advisory committee.

## Summary

In summary, major revisions were made to the two primary data collection methods used to evaluate student performance, the *Concentration Portfolio* and the *Concentration Learning Plan*. Although these data have been collected previously, we expect that the current data will yield more precise information that will be available in May, 2009. We have 2008 data from the simulated licensing examination which is being analyzed. We are also considering examining correlations between licensing examination and GPA. If there are significant positive correlations, we would interpret this finding as providing some criterion-related validation of our grading process. Similarly, the Alumni Survey has undergone a major revision in 2008, and a small data set from the new version has been analyzed. Our process evaluations have continued in much the same way over the last 4 years. However, the current focus is on a more systematic method of organizing and using the data.

## **Newly Revised List of Expected Student Learning Outcomes for 2008-2009 and Program Outcomes:** (Revised by Curriculum Committee, 2007-2008)

1. Conduct multi-level generalist practice based on the planned intervention process
2. Demonstrate the ability to apply critical thinking within the context of professional social work practice.
3. Analyze and apply the values and ethics of the social work profession.
4. Using the strengths perspective, practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills that are appropriate for the range of human differences.
5. Understand and challenge mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
6. Apply strategies of advocacy and social change to advance justice.
7. Understand and interpret the history, development, and current trends of the profession.
8. Select and apply human behavior theory and evidence to inform practice using the ecosystems perspective as an organizing framework.
9. Demonstrate the ability to analyze, formulate, and influence social policies.
10. Evaluate and apply research findings to practice and evaluate individual practice interventions at multi levels appropriately.
11. Demonstrate the ability to communicate across client populations, colleagues and communities, in both written and verbal form.
12. Demonstrate the ability to appropriately use feedback, supervision and consultation in the service of professional conduct and growth.



- 13. Demonstrate ability to function within the structure of organizations, delivery systems and community networks and seek organizational change.
- 14. Identify with the social work profession and behave professionally.
- 15. Demonstrate an increasing ability to engage in informed and systematic Self-Directed Practice.
- 16. Demonstrate elements of leadership and the ability to shape the professional environment.
- 17. Demonstrate an ability to analyze and critically evaluate the contextual elements to inform social work practice.
- 18. Apply balanced attention to multi-level practice.
- 19. Demonstrate the ability to practice at increasing levels of complexity using specialized theories and practice methods.
- 20. Strengthen ongoing exchanges with external constituencies through service and collaboration (Std. 7.0)
- 21. The faculty will engage in, encourage, and promote scholarly activities and achievements (Std. (Std. 7.1)
- 22. The program will engage in professional leadership and innovative efforts that are congruent with the mission of the Division of Social Work and the University (Std. 7.2)
- 23. Attract, orient, and retain qualified graduate students in the MSW Program.

Dept. Head/ Director	Date	Dean	Date	VPAA	Date
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Adapted from: University of Alabama SACS site (<http://sacs.ua.edu/degreeInfo2.cfm?college=2&dept=50>);

University of Western Kentucky SACS Accreditation Review Process (<http://www.wku.edu/sacs/assessmentmanual.htm>) ; and

Mrs. Marila D. Palmer, VP-Executive Affairs & Planning, LeTourneau University, Presentation to 2008 SACS-COC Institute

*The subsequent attachments provide paper back-up copies for selected DVD files.*

## Attachment A – Application and Enrollment Data

Admissions Year	2006	2007	2008
Applications Accepted Through	7/15/06	4/30/07	5-14-08
Total Applications Reviewed	80	94	79
Number Accepted	60	57	59
Acceptance Rate	75%	61%	75%
<b>Enrollment Data</b>			
Number Enrollees (% of admitted)	47 (78%)	52 (91%)	46(78%)
Average GRE of Enrollees***	407/ 422/ 4.0	419/ 463/ 3.9^	423/461/3.8
Average MAT of Enrollees***	402	385^^	392
4 year GPA of Enrollees	3.08	3.03	3.16
2 year GPA of Enrollees	3.25	3.23	3.33
<b>Demographic Data</b>			
Minority Percentage	45% (21)	37%	41%
Female Percentage	91% (43)	91% (51)	94%(43)
Average Age	33	29	31
Previous Master's Degree	7 (15%)	5 (8%)	2(1%)

2006-2007	AS	Web	OC	TOTAL	2007-2008	AS*	Web	OC	TOTAL
Students Enrolling	3	23	21	<b>47</b>	Students Enrolling	7	25	20	<b>52</b>
	1 wb 2 oc	1 is in 2 <sup>nd</sup> yr	13 FT 8 PT			1 wb 6 oc		16 FT 4 PT	
African-American	2	13	5	<b>20 (43%)</b>	African-American	1	11	8	<b>20(38%)</b>
Caucasian	1	9	16	<b>26 (55%)</b>	Caucasian	6	13	11	<b>30(58%)</b>
Native American/ Asian/ Multi-Racial	0	1	0	<b>1 (2%)</b>	Native American/ Asian/ Hispanic/ Multi-Racial	0	1	0	<b>1(1%)</b>
					Did not report		1	1	<b>2(3)</b>
Female	3	21	19	<b>43 (91%)</b>	Female	7	22	17	<b>(46)88%</b>
Male	0	2	2	<b>4 (9%)</b>	Male	0	3	3	<b>6(12%)</b>
Average Age	28	34	32	<b>33</b>	Average Age	28	33	26	<b>29</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Masters Degree	0	3	4	<b>7 (15%)</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Masters Degree		4	1	<b>5(15%)</b>

\*not included in Web or OC individual scores

**Entire Student Body**

2004 – 88 Students (36% minority, 10% male)  
2005 – 103 Students (37% minority, 7% male)

2006 – 110 Students (42% minority, 6% male)  
2007 – 105 Students (45% minority, 5% male)

## Attachment B – Student Exit Interview and Focus Group Data

Question	2006			2007			2008		
	Web	Campus	All	Web	Campus	All	Web	Campus	All
Overall, I am satisfied with my graduate experience in the MSW program.	4.05	4.05	<b>4.05</b>	4.43	3.35	<b>3.84</b>	4.53	3.69	<b>4.17*</b>
I feel that I was respected in the MSW program.	4.10	4.32	<b>4.21</b>	4.07	3.22	<b>3.59</b>	4.47	3.67	<b>4.14</b>
Social Work faculty at VSU are supportive of MSW students.	4.40	4.16	<b>4.28</b>	4.71	3.56	<b>4.06</b>	4.53	3.46	<b>4.07*</b>
I received quality advising during my graduate program.	4.00	3.74	<b>3.87</b>	4.21	3.11	<b>3.59</b>	3.59	3.77	<b>3.67</b>
I found the social work faculty willing to provide extra assistance when needed.	4.25	3.95	<b>4.10</b>	4.71	3.83	<b>4.22</b>	4.18	4.00	<b>4.10</b>
I received quality feedback during my field practicums.	3.95	4.00	<b>3.97</b>	4.07	4.22	<b>4.16</b>	4.14	3.92	<b>4.20</b>

**2006 Exit Interview and Focus Group Data**

**Survey Responses – QUANTITATIVE DATA**

0=Does Not Apply; 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree  
Web=20; On-Campus=19; Overall=39

	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
I am satisfied with my graduate experience in MSW program.	4.05	4.05	<b>4.05</b>
The program was basically what I expected when I enrolled.	3.10	3.42	<b>3.26</b>
The education I received was worth the cost of attending graduate school.	4.05	4.06	<b>4.05</b>
Significant changes to my work schedule to participate in the MSW program.	4.50	4.61	<b>4.56</b>
Significant changes in my home/family life to participate in the MSW program.	4.45	4.53	<b>4.49</b>
If I had to do it all over, I would still attend the MSW program at VSU.	4.05	3.89	<b>3.97</b>
Isolation was a problem for me during the MSW program.	3.20	2.78	<b>3.00</b>
I felt respected in the MSW program.	4.10	4.32	<b>4.21</b>
I felt isolated during the program.	2.15	2.11	<b>2.13</b>
<b>FEEDBACK</b>	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Work faculty at VSU are supportive of MSW students.	4.40	4.16	<b>4.28</b>
Work staff at VSU are supportive of MSW students.	4.25	4.22	<b>4.24</b>
I received quality advising during my graduate program.	4.00	3.74	<b>3.87</b>
Are the social work faculty willing to provide extra assistance when needed.	4.25	3.95	<b>4.10</b>
Through my interaction with faculty I found professional role models.	4.40	4.21	<b>4.31</b>
Through my interaction with field instructors I found professional role models.	4.05	4.37	<b>4.21</b>
I received quality feedback on academic coursework.	3.90	4.21	<b>4.05</b>
I received quality feedback on professional	4.10	4.11	<b>4.10</b>

opment issues.			
and quality feedback during my field practicums.	3.95	4.00	<b>3.97</b>

<b>STATEMENTS</b>	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Former orientation program was important to my transition to graduate school.	2.92*	3.89*	<b>3.48</b>
Challenged academically during the MSW program.	4.25	4.00	<b>4.13</b>
Challenged professionally during the MSW program.	4.15	4.26	<b>4.21</b>
Challenged personally during the MSW program.	4.70	4.42	<b>4.56</b>
70% of coursework was too difficult.	2.45	2.26	<b>2.36</b>
Overall, I felt the grades I was given were inflated.	2.00	2.06	<b>2.03</b>
Struggled academically in the MSW program.	2.20	2.17	<b>2.18</b>
Practicums were very important to my educational experience.	3.70*	4.47*	<b>4.08</b>
Satisfied with my field placements.	3.85	4.26	<b>4.05</b>
Work was a valuable learning tool.	2.90	3.22	<b>3.05</b>
<b>MSW</b>	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Confident that I will be able to apply what I learned during the MSW program.	4.50	4.53	<b>4.51</b>
Developed strong relationships with other students in cohort.	4.16	4.11	<b>4.13</b>
Developed a strong professional network.	4.25*	3.68*	<b>3.97</b>
Confident to use social work theories in real-world situations.	4.30	4.21	<b>4.26</b>
Confident I am prepared to serve clients well as a professional social worker.	4.15	4.21	<b>4.18</b>
Confident that what I learned in the program has relevance to real-world practice.	4.50	4.11	<b>4.31</b>
Confident I will find employment in my field of interest.	4.50	4.37	<b>4.44</b>

Differences were noted as significant if p-values were .10 or lower; Responses of 0 were coded as missing for analysis

## **WEB HYBRID COHORT**

### *Survey Responses - Qualitative Data*

#### How did you LEARN ABOUT the MSW program?

Worker who had already been accepted

(IV-E Student)

For students

Psychologist Dr. Rainer and my supervisors in Tifton, Michelle Walker, LCSW & Susan Gordon, LCSW

From Alabama I had no previous knowledge of Georgia MSW programs. I happened to come across the website doing a Google

GA Conference

and

ended VSU for undergrad. I enjoyed attending VSU so when I thought about grad school I looked at what VSU had to offer.

Researching schools on the internet

Undergraduate practicum instructor (he knew a lady from his church that was in the program)

Research as well as the Registrar's Office – When I was planning to apply for the campus program I was asked if I wanted to apply

for a web-based program.

Advisor in undergrad told me to go into an MSW program and I searched for where to go and ended up here.

Website

#### How did you DECIDE TO APPLY to the MSW program?

Found out LPC's have a harder time finding work than MSWs and social workers have more career choices.

Advancement, IV-E funded, improve quality of social work at the agency

Web-based program made it a realistic opportunity for me.

They told it was "more bang for your buck", stronger licensure

Instead of working a few years before getting my MSW, I wanted to go straight through school. I was getting married and moving to

the closest.

Someone who had been through the program said it was great.

I wanted to get a graduate degree and felt it was the right time both professionally and personally.

Web-based and I could work full time and not attend classes everyday.

15 minutes away and work full time. I didn't want to travel to Valdosta 2 to 3 times a week.

Working for BBBS and enjoyed working with children and families. I also enjoyed helping people. VSU had a friendly staff and

so I applied.

State would cover tuition and I only had to attend for 1 year.

I wanted to advance my education as well as do something I enjoy.

The opportunity to gain a MSW through a web component

allowed me to work and go to school at the same time.

I wanted to get back to my original dream, therapy, and to get out of a box I had created for myself.

I always wanted to help people and I was informed this would be the best way to get what I needed to do that.

I wanted to get a Master's degree in something and after doing some research, Social Work stood out to me.

I wanted to get MSW to enhance future career in Social Work.

When I graduated from undergraduate school I would be more marketable with a MSW degree.

VSU was the only school near Central Georgia that had a web-based program that offered a MSW.



FUNDING an important issue for you? Why or why not? Did you receive funding to attend the MSW program? If so, please describe.

not important right now, I have loans. It will hurt to pay back \$20K. You have to take lots of EXTRA loan amounts to make up for the expense of lost work time for pay with little financial support from someone else (I'm single).

-E with a child in college, I would not have been able to attend otherwise.

received some scholarships from my employer. I paid out of state tuition the 1<sup>st</sup> year. I probably wouldn't have been able to continue if it was not waived the last 2 years.

had to borrow a lot of money (\$48,000).

was important. I had help from family financially.

took out loans (it's the only debt I have but I feel it is worth it).

received funding from my job for my tuition expenses but I had to cover transportation and books.

as a single female working full time and not able to pay for my education out of pocket. I received loans from financial aid.

money was not an issue. I received a grant to cover my educational expenses.

because I have to work. I received Federal loans.

took out a student loan.

couldn't pay out of pocket so I wanted to get the least amount of student loans necessary.

was very stressful to constantly be in financial stress and have to pay for everything.

funding was an issue and I received funding to attend from two sources.

have subsidized and unsubsidized loans. I was unable to work during this time and needed extra income to be able to do the MSW program.

that I feel that cost was no more than what other programs were charging. I had to get loans in order to attend.

Do you KNOW NOW about the MSW program that you wish you had known when you were applying?

will be BROKE because you can't work as much. Social time will plummet, and unless you are extremely aware of relationship dynamics, you will struggle in intimate relationships.

will struggle in intimate relationships.

volume of work (not difficulty) – I last attended college in the 1970's. This experience has been very different, an endurance course where we had a few quality assignments vs. volume (ex: weekly discussions). Also, I wish that practicum wouldn't be so inflexible in terms of what was insisted upon. I may have explored an admin. focused MSW if I had to do it over.

was insisted upon. I may have explored an admin. focused MSW if I had to do it over.

was insisted upon. I may have explored an admin. focused MSW if I had to do it over.

had known more about adjustments that would need to be made to accommodate the practicum.

for example, I tried to be prepared for anything.

difficult it would be to juggle work, school, practicum, and home.

students were prejudiced and the program dealt more with rural environments.

could have been able to prepare myself better if I had known that we would have such a heavy caseload and that the last year from the program would be nonstop.

learning would be nonstop.

too difficult to work full time and do Practicum.

web program was very unorganized.

time does not mean less work.

amount of "busy work" that would be required and the amount of time that would be needed to complete it.

could have known about the level of demand the MSW program places on a student.

amount of time it would demand.

everyone in this program is positive or can interact with others in a professional, educational manner. Some are only out for the money.

and not be able to be "Super Social Worker" upon graduating.

Underlying costs for online – Cost of computer ink, gas for long distance (120 miles), computer paper, lodging expenses overnight, etc.

Required work

I had known that work would be so time consuming. This was basically during the foundation year. I felt I had a lot of busy work.

### Classes did you find the MOST USEFUL and why?

Dr. Vodde taught. Also, HBSE was most useful after I looked over my BIG notebook. Finally, the first class with Dr. Tandy on groupings, psychosocials, etc.

Concentration year was most useful – With 18 years experience in DFCS, I wish I could have been admitted as advanced standing. It has been exciting for me and I have applied what I learned to several state-level DFCS projects: pilot program, grant application, etc.

Advanced practice – individuals; program evaluation

Advanced Practice (important to know), Rural-Indiv (I learned to go deeper, it pushed me to work harder), Professional Seminar (need to know)

Advanced Practice (Vodde) & SW Practice with Individuals (Vodde)

Advanced Practice with individuals

Advanced Practice classes because I learn more from doing. However, it was difficult to learn practice courses via the web.

Advanced Practice (the group project), Psychotherapy (for the license exam), Working with Individuals (for every reason I will be a social worker)

Advanced Practice courses were pertinent to learning and useful to me.

Generalist practice(s), Psychopathology, Policy

Dr. Vodde's classes, SOWK 6000 and the WebCT class were most useful. I feel like I learned a lot from these classes and I will bring that knowledge in my professional career. The WebCT class was very helpful in teaching me how to submit assignments and understand the process.

Advanced research (important because it equipped me with knowledge on how to go out and gather accurate and scholarly data), Advanced Practice in rural areas (important because of the therapeutic models and skills I learned), Social Policy (essential because it helped me understand how policy affects the masses)

Advanced Practice (working with multiple disciplines, diagnoses and understanding how to use DSM-IV-TR more efficiently) – The professional practice course

Advanced Practice

Social Work, SOWK 7630

Advanced Practice Skills w/Individuals, Research, HBSE I, and General Practice Skills I & II - I just seemed to retain and apply more from these than others.

Advanced Practice Dr. Tandy's Practice courses useful because she focused on how we could enhance our learning. Dr. Holliman's Policy course was interesting and allowed us to learn useful information. Dr. White and Dr. Vodde's Research classes were places of learning and rebuilding.

Advanced Practice Vodde – Skills (Skills of interviewing and counseling techniques); Dr. Tandy – All classes (A better understanding of human behavior and self-awareness); Dr. Holliman – All Classes (A better perspective of what generalist SW encompasses including political awareness)

Advanced Practice Psychopathology and School Social Work

Advanced Practice Psychopathology – Now I understand my children and myself.

### Classes did you find the LEAST USEFUL and why?

Advanced Practice – The book was bad and I didn't really learn anything. Unfortunately, Family Therapy was least useful as well. Advanced Practice (organizations/communities)

Rural Families SOWK 7630 – This course is useful in preparing for licensure, but it can be completed in a shorter amount of time. Family therapy class - in comparison to Individual Practice it was hollow. I feel I got very little out of it.

ation to WebCT

– I did not learn anything about policy in this class at all. I thought it was a waste of my time.

Work. In my practicum I had to facilitate groups and I felt I needed more education.

didn't learn how to apply theories very well in either class)

seminar class (SOWK 7630) was a waste of student and instructor time. I could have done the same thing and gained as much knowledge

by doing the practice tests on my own without having to come to class.

Some courses were relevant

Professional Seminar (This course could be done independently. No face to face needed, you can do everything online.)

Program Evaluation (this class should be optional)

and Grievance, Policy courses

– Maybe I just did not like the course because I do not have a particular reason as to why.

I found the Research Evaluation course the least useful because from what I learned during my practicum people are hired that specifically

are trained to conduct evaluations.

*designing the MSW CURRICULUM, what would you add, remove, or change? Please be specific.*

I would add something on billing, but maybe make it optional. I would allow students to exempt the computer class if they test out of it

or something. Groups need to be revamped, it was unorganized. Family is good, but need a professor with family experience. Also I would

emphasize everyone knows the importance of networking!!!

I would delete two orientation courses and settings for students as I was employed in that setting for several years.

– don't need 2 policy courses. Add a class specific to group therapy.

– need instruction on clinical writing, court preparation and vocabulary enhancement.

– I would keep it the same – shorten SOWK 7630.

– I would add more clinical electives/courses.

– I would change setting classes to come prior to beginning Practicum. I would want more electives and the option to have classes earlier

in the

– I would add more clinical-based classes, classes on urban issues in Social Work, and a class on international social work.

– I would have new teachers for HBSE, especially for HBSE II

– I would remove the seminar class.

– I would add courses on international Social Work, child development, Program implementation and supervising, understanding various

settings

– I would allow students to take more than two electives. I feel that some of the electives should be required courses.

– I would have class face to face time – reduce to Saturday classes. Add more time online and assignments with online groups

– I would remove the Research Evaluation course.

– I would add a class that has more of a rural focus.

*Room or web TEACHING TECHNIQUES were most helpful for you?*

– Dr. Tandy and Tandy gave great therapeutic technique examples in class. Web discussions for Dr. Vodde were tedious.

– I would use class time productively and varying techniques like films and speakers related to the subjects. Dr. Tandy, especially, did a good

– I would use discussion topics initiated by professors with required feedback from all students were most helpful.

– I would use games in the class, role playing, lectures on CD or PowerPoint

– I would use discussion boards online and the weekly notes posted online were most helpful.

– I would use PowerPoint on web with voice was most helpful.

...sion, not reading of Power Points was most helpful.

...re helpful.

...projects, films, exercises, and practicing skills were most helpful.

...sion postings

...Point and lectures on CD

...lay, specific case studies and examples

...ndy used many techniques.

...sion Postings in which the professor participated in the discussion

...and movies that were examples, assignments, such as critiques, to apply knowledge

...were all helpful.

...onally know of cases of ACADEMIC DISHONESTY during the MSW program? If yes, please describe. Do have suggestions about  
...ying and dealing with academic dishonesty?

...that in Dr. Tandy's class SEVERAL students in F2F (2004) made up socials and never actually interviewed anyone. In a case like  
...it to identify but I think they should be dismissed from the program if proven guilty because I do not want to have colleagues t  
...test in school. Imagine what they may do in the field.

...st taking at home using the honor system was difficult. Maybe tests should be proctored.

...ere is really no way to catch a dishonest person if he/she doesn't want to be caught. The caliber of professor at VSU will quick  
...y these individuals through constant observation of the students' writing.

...happens I think there should be some means of warnings before dismissing a student from the program.

...ive any issues or DIFFICULTIES with professors during your program? If yes, please describe the issue(s) and how you worked it  
...professors, but several guest speakers bashed DFCS.

...ometimes just personality clashes but that is normal.

...at they were resolved by the end of the semester. There are too many details to put on this evaluation.

...here was an instance when an "F" paper was given back for revision. The revisions were made just as suggested but the paper  
...ned an "F."

...ally. Sometimes I felt a little intimidated by some.

...re than one occasion I have noticed favoritism. Also, in one class, I felt as if none of my ideas were valid or acknowledged. To  
...ut it on the course evaluation.

...feel that some professors see any comments or suggestions as insults and are not open to others. I feel that they do not consi  
...ts in what they do.

...TIVATED YOU to do your best work in the MSW program?

...g my parents proud and feeling a sense of accomplishment.

...attitude of the professors

...n personal motivation – this was the first thing I ever attempted for me, not family or work. I had something to prove to mys

...goal for myself to make straight A's and graduate in the Honor Society. I was motivated by my desire to do my best.

...se I was advanced standing, I feel that I had to work harder to remain in line with the 3-year students.

professors who had higher expectations of me  
I motivated myself through setting goals as well as received motivation through support from family, friends, and peers.  
motivation as well as my advisor, she was a great mentor.

to have good grades (it is a compulsion). I was my own motivator.

spirit of excellence  
knowledge that I had almost reached my life's goal kept me focused even during those times that I wanted to give up.  
a better life than my mother.

perfectionist.

needed to ensure I could be the best I could be and needed the degree to get me there and be able to provide for my family.

needed to learn because I thought the more I could learn the more I would be led toward being a "Super Social Worker." I did not know  
the end that this was not realistic.

quality and expertise of all the instructors and director, the desire to do my best

and the desire to accomplish my goal

issues with my daughter running away and losing my sister to cancer. I was unable to focus and the professors gave me words of  
encouragement and allowed me extra time in classes. It was good to know that some of my professors had dealt with similar problems  
themselves.

*Describe your experience with the PORTFOLIO PROJECTS? Did you find them helpful? Do you have other suggestions for measuring overall  
learning progress? Do you have suggestions for a final capstone project (research thesis, exams, etc)?*

My experience was HORRIBLE. The project was not helpful.

The portfolio is the most reasonable method to display mastering of all the program objectives.

My experience was good. Others were having lots of difficulty, there should be a standard.

The portfolio, I feel, was better than having to complete a thesis. I did find it helpful in reflecting on my assignments and work that I  
completed.

The portfolio was a waste of time. I prefer a thesis, something that may be published.

It was somewhat helpful. I would like to see the same 7 outcomes from both foundation and concentration years and it be presented at the  
end of orientation.

I thought the portfolios were great. I had no problems with it and I would rather do that.

The portfolio in Concentration should be given at the end of each semester. For example, have the questions to fit those courses each  
semester.

I do not find them too helpful. They were very time consuming. Although, it was neat to sit back and realize all the classes and assignments  
completed over years.

My experience was great, but I feel a comprehensive exam would be a great project.

It could include this project with a class, maybe Seminar if possible. Work on objectives throughout the semester so that the portfolio  
can be completed at a certain time.

I found the portfolio projects helpful towards my career.

I really liked the portfolio! I think it is appropriate.

I do not find them helpful.

The portfolio was just nerve racking for no reason at all. Maybe a thesis would be more beneficial, although more difficult.

It would help to clarify overall self awareness and how much was put into mastering the program.

I liked the portfolio. It was helpful because it gave me the opportunity to think about what I actually learned.

The objectives are "too wordy." I would prefer that the requirements are consistent throughout the department.

Did you attend another GRADUATE PROGRAM previously? If so, please describe your previous graduate program experience and how it impacted your experience in the MSW program.

Describe your previous WORK EXPERIENCE (years employed, type of work). How do you think your previous work experience impacted your experience in the MSW program?

Before entering the program I had been in the field as a therapist in the hospital for 5 months, my only field practice. I started working in a hospital to decide between nursing or the MSW. I chose the MSW because I loved my work. My group experience at work was needed for the Groupwork class. The Groupwork class was not very conducive to learning.

I worked 18 years in DFCS. I wish that with new training and theoretical base of DFCS an advanced standing could be made possible. Fighting lawsuits, professionalizing DFCS is a priority.

Management and social services

When I entered the program with confidence. I couldn't imagine beginning the first year GREEN.

My only previous work experience besides my BSW practicum.

I worked 2 years full time prior to entering the program. I think this was invaluable as a base on which to learn, but it showed that many of the foundation courses were a waste of my time.

Before school I was an activities assistant in a nursing home. In college I was a waitress as well as worked in floral design. After college I worked in Medical Reconciliations/Discrepancies, worked for 2 years in DFCS, 1 year in child/adolescent mental health, and 1 year as a contractor for a contract company with the state.

How my previous work experiences impacted my experience in this program.

I worked as a Program Manager for Big Brothers Big Sisters, an IDT Case Manager and CSI Case Manager for Satilla Community College. These positions helped to open my eyes to Social Work and helped me to better understand my coursework.

I worked at DFCS for 2 years. 1 year was pre-MSW and I was able to use my experiences at DFCS for many class assignments.

I worked 20 years in Behavioral Health. This certainly made the MSW program less challenging at times.

I worked with the mental health population. I know I will always have a bias toward that population.

I worked 8 years

My 8 years of Social Services gave me a foundation of experiences to pull from for the program.

I worked with the school system for 18 years. This program will be a great asset to my career.

I worked as a paraprofessional in an elementary school for 21 years; therefore I work with children and families. I felt that I wanted to continue working with this population but I wanted to be able to help them more.

How has your role as a PARENT? If yes, how has that affected your participation in the MSW program?

My only child is in college. It would be very difficult otherwise due to the volume of work.

The web program accommodated my need to be home during the evenings then begin class work late in the evenings.

It is difficult to complete work assignments and practicum hours if there was an emergency to take care of (i.e. ill child, etc.).

It is difficult to make time for kids but it is feasible if you have a supportive spouse. Extended family would have been a blessing.

I experienced pregnancy complications during the program.

I have neglected my 7 year-old son tremendously.

Without the support of my family I couldn't have done a MSW program. My children were also old enough that their needs were met and promised.

has at time made me feel neglectful of my child.

was very difficult to have children, work full time, and attend this program. The Web program allowed me to work late at night with my family during their waking hours.

Sometimes I didn't have enough time to focus on my assignments.

Give any additional comments or suggestions about the MSW program?

really bothered by the fact that one professor does not really teach anything.

practicum earlier. In general the program started too slowly and ended too "heavy." With the DFCS practicum, let students do their job duties if it is Social Services. Why not teach a CPS worker to be a better CPS worker? Doing "other" job duties add to the confusion.

Professors need to be able to utilize the Vista program for their course. Expectations are there for students and should be for professors.

Even if a professor teaches a web course they should know how to use it. Snail mailing assignments back is silly.

Also, I think grades were inflated. I handed in most papers that were not proofread. I spend little time and then I was still given A's. I didn't deserve them.

The MSW program should be as challenging as an advanced degree. Overall, there was a good foundation, it just needs some tweaking. Please revise the last year. Going from Summer to Spring non-stop was stressful.

The amount of work and assignments, at times, was not conducive to working full time and going to school.

Had I attended and will receive my MSW. However, I would not have participated in this program and dealt with the frustration of waiting for 3 years.

I enjoyed the process. I feel it has been most rewarding.

The MSW program was more stressful than I realized.

That if I had not had to work, I could have learned much more and participated in discussion much more.

You should have a student committee not made up of the most "willing" students. You might get more information.

Clinical components should be added to the program to ensure that students are prepared for the licensure exams.

More adjustments need to be made to gear the courses to "online" format. Time in face to face can be less and on Saturday to reduce travel time, cost of gas, and overnight expenses.

The program was very challenging and overwhelming. I wish there was a way to lessen the work that's required of the students.

I would recommend others to enroll in this program.

### **ON CAMPUS COHORT**

#### *Survey Responses - Qualitative Data*

How did you LEARN ABOUT the MSW program?

While at graduate school

While researching the degrees offered at VSU on the website

From a friend who had graduated from the MSW program and talked about what a great program it was.

From a former MSW student

Through research and from a friend who thought of coming to the MSW program previously.

From a friend who was in the program

From professors at Albany State University

gh researching different programs  
ve word of mouth. VSU was the only MSW program in Southwest Georgia.  
dergraduate program  
e and I were moving to the Valdosta area and researched schools in this area that had a MSW program.  
research of Georgia programs  
d with VSU MSW Alum

d it when I was applying for colleges online  
ch  
d associated with a student

u DECIDE TO APPLY to the MSW program?

always wanted to be a social worker to help others.  
nowledge focus and application of the MSW field was consistent with my interests and aspirations.  
that I wanted to be able to serve my community and felt as a social worker, this was my best opportunity.  
been a goal for me to earn a MSW.  
of the jobs that I wanted required a MSW.  
close to my home (within 1 hour travel, in state). I needed higher education to advance professionally.  
ed to go ahead and get my Master's after undergrad.  
ter career options  
ed to apply to the program because I sat out of school one year due to an unexpected pregnancy. I thought that maybe I could  
her my studies as a social worker and to be able to gain more opportunities in the work force.  
ance my knowledge and stay on track of learning more  
ways enjoyed working with people and took this as an opportunity to gain additional skills and knowledge.  
was the most clinical between GSU, UGA & VSU. The cost of attendance also was a factor.  
st in Admin/Consultation/Training positions that required MSW  
ed to become a social worker.  
ed to be a social worker and was already established in Valdosta.  
close to home and I wanted to further my education.  
better jobs and better pay  
her my degree for private practice and have a versatile title or licensure

FUNDING an important issue for you? Why or why not? Did you receive funding to attend the MSW program? If so, please describe

nd funding was a very important issue for me because I could not work full time anymore and I had to support a family. I did not  
o attend the MSW program.  
ecause of the need to acquire numerous loans to cover tuition, books, and to offset decrease in wages due to schedule change  
g is EXTREMELY important. Even with a part-time job I am living off of school loans that will take me MANY years to pay off. I  
hool was reasonably priced for my situation.  
took out student loans to pay for graduate school and worked full time at the beginning of the program. I quickly found out that  
oo stressful and had to cut back to part-time.



had lost wages to attend and received no funding.

wasn't important because of federal student loans (that I will be paying off for the rest of my life).

ved student loans to fund the program.

was very important. I tried to quit working but loans do run out. The program is not too expensive, but cost becomes a factor  
ess.

unding was an issue for me. Besides paying out of pocket for my classes I had to pay high gas prices and drive four hours, four  
o my internship without receiving any funds for my practicum work. Yes, I got a loan.

out loans I will struggle to repay; however, I will dance in happiness with my degree, experiences, and future.

the GI Bill to help supplement the cost of tuition.

n was affordable. I took out student loans and quit working.

didn't earn enough to pay for MSW w/o assistance (IV-E).

g was difficult – the practicum made finding a professional job difficult. I received student loans and financial assistance from  
s.

y parents paid for my education.

worked full time to support myself.

### What do you KNOW NOW about the MSW program that you wish you had known when you were applying?

SW program called for a two year internship and most of them did not offer stipends.

pecific challenges that I would face in terms of time management and lifestyle balance

was no way I could have worked full-time throughout my 2 years.

level wages are low for a Master's degree and to keep assignments better organized for the portfolio.

es a lot of counseling and assignments require a lot of time! Also, don't purchase required test because we barely cracked them  
s.

I had known the program was not geared more to real-life situations and how to address them.

I had known it was a requirement to do foundation and concentration objectives. Entering into a program knowing this will be  
ement will train students to remember past classes and assignments, especially coming from another school.

acticum hours required, objectives to be met through coursework & experience, licensure issues

orkload

I had known that much of the work done in courses was very similar to my undergraduate degree.

### What classes did you find the MOST USEFUL and why?

Practice I for Individuals; Practice II for Communities – The classes were interesting and made you interested in learning.

Practice w/Individuals (good basis for counseling skills), Practice in Rural Areas I-Individuals (excellent application of skills), SOWK in a  
Modde (excellent focus on working with colleagues)

Practice-Individuals & Families/ (HBSE) theory based courses, because we actually applied what was learned in practicum

Practicum & Seminar because I actually got to work in the field of SW

Psychopathology/SW Health settings, I learned lots of information needed for specialized practice

Advanced Social Work class (it was directly related to practice as a school social worker), Orientation to Advanced Generalist Practice (a  
s, important issues and topics within the field of Social Work; also prepared me for the program and other classes), Advanced

Practice-Individuals (was beneficial because I plan to pursue a Social Work career directed in Practice)

Giddings' course called Orientation to Advanced Generalist Practice was the most useful course. It was a wake up course, letting students know what to expect out of the MSW program. Dr. Giddings is an excellent professor and should teach more classes!

Social Work Practice

These were all useful! I enjoyed it all!

Practice w/ Individuals, Practice w/ Organizations, Psychopathology, Mental Health Settings

Practice I & II (I want to be a clinical worker), Vodde's classes gave us practical knowledge

Practicum, Practicum Seminar, Practice w/ Individuals I & II

Dr. Vodde's – Implications to practice are immeasurable

Social Work (this is my career field of choice), Independent Study in Mexico (the cultural lessons I learned will last my whole life)

Orientation Advanced Practice classes (these gave me my first look at social work), Policy classes (I knew nothing of policy at the beginning of the program)

Dr. Vodde's Psychopathology – It was interesting and he was an excellent teacher. He gives good examples of his own experiences rather than read out of the book.

Practice I & II (I want to be a clinical worker), Vodde's classes gave us practical knowledge

Practicum, Practicum Seminar the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of foundation year (named the basics), any course Dr. Vodde taught, Practicum Seminar the 1<sup>st</sup> year

These courses taught about implementing all levels of social work and learning about applying myself as a direct practitioner.

Which courses did you find the LEAST USEFUL and why?

Licensure class because it needs to be taught more in depth; the basic computer class

Specific course but some specific assignments. But this isn't the forum for that.

Practicum evaluation – basically the same things learned in practice course/Research course combined

Particular course, but some assignments were "fillers" or "busy work."

Policy, research and management classes least useful because I plan to pursue a social work career in clinical practice. I have

Having received a BSW I learned enough about these subjects for clinical practice.

Last semester of the field class 7630 is not necessary. We did nothing. We had the same speakers that spoke on topics from the

Books to our class. Basically, I would have just brought the licensure book and preferred to do the test without going to class because

Sometimes the professor didn't know the answers.

Professional seminar was least helpful. Yes, we need to study for the licensure exam but what is done in class can be done at home

Incorporated into other classes. We could also meet two times.

– We had a good instructor for policy, but it is not my area of interest.

Psychology, Intro to SW

– the way it was taught

Advanced practices in Organizations & Community

Most of all courses useful in one way or another, except group work!

When designing the MSW CURRICULUM, what would you add, remove or change? Please be specific.

– try to include stipends for internships.

– the entire last semester can be dropped. We have already had a research class. I feel more electives should be taken in the first

– which you're interested.

– Practicum available as a summer option.

– Psychopathology should be a required course taught during a semester instead of an elective. The courses in 2<sup>nd</sup> semester concentrated

– should be Psychopathology, Licensure Preparation, and the Management Course.

– should have two separate programs: one being a clinical track and the other Macro Practice.

add more study on how to work with groups. The group class we had was awful because sometimes we didn't do a group. More could be added as well.

Don't spend so much money on text books when more time should be spent on lectures from the text instead of just assigned reading. Labus.

Registration ceremony would be on a week day, I would not give so many assignments, and I would spend time discussing what happens on campus.

add a Pharmacology course.

elective tracts (i.e. clinical, administrative, school, etc.)

Practicums – some more practice

appreciate seminar for practicum as an advanced standing student.

more group work and add a dissertation for exiting

Room or web TEACHING TECHNIQUES were most helpful for you?

Playing

Games, discussions, videos

Dr. De's, as hard as he was!

Points

Face to face environment was most helpful.

Material that could be viewed outside of class (especially ones with vocals), PowerPoints

Work better through lectures and notes with some discussion involved.

Professors lectured and provided notes. I enjoy using PowerPoints and visual aids during class.

Games and role play

I like hearing the experiences of my professor. It gives me an idea of how I can possibly handle future situations.

Demonstrating direct practice techniques as a clinician.

Do you personally know of cases of ACADEMIC DISHONESTY during the MSW program? If yes, please describe. Do you have suggestions about preventing and dealing with academic dishonesty?

Working on tests, purchase of papers turned in to class

Students did cheat on tests in one instance while the teacher was out of the room and looked at each other's paper. This is a very terrible situation. It's hard to come forward when you know that you're going to see the individuals in class. I think students feel if they report on someone what they're supposed to do and now it's up to the staff to figure out what's going on.

That I heard rumors.

That I don't use hearsay to judge academic character.

Working on tests - In one instance the professor left the classroom during the exam. Exams should always be monitored.

Working on tests - In one instance the professor left the classroom during the exam. Exams should always be monitored.

That I heard rumors.

Academic dishonesty – there were a few cases of ignorance when some students didn't know how and when to cite sources.

They know some people cheated on tests and plagiarized. They were caught.

A group of about 3 people were cheating on a test. Not sure how to deal with it because it puts everyone in a weird situation.

One person used information off the internet without citing the reference.

Do you have any issues or DIFFICULTIES with professors during your program? If yes, please describe the issue(s) and how you worked it out?

were a couple of occasions where I felt like I was graded unfairly. I talked with the instructors in private and discussed my concerns and feedback to improve my grades in future assignments.

I don't feel like my practicum placement fit my needs but I was "strongly encouraged" to stay in the placement though I felt it was below my expectations. My second placement (concentration) fell through as well. Asked several times for updates, etc. and was told I was "not too worried."

A professor gave me a "C" in a course when I knew I made a "B." When I met with her she stated "you were close but you did not get credit." I did not do it because it was not needed. Then she said, "You missed two classes." That pissed me off because the first time she was in the hospital. The second time she was sick – this was an excused absence. I felt this was the reason for the "C" (miscommunication).

Some professors are rude and don't listen.

### MOTIVATED YOU to do your best work in the MSW program?

Some particular instructors motivated me to do my best work. I also motivated myself because I want to go out in the job market well prepared and be the best Social Worker I can be.

Perfectionism

My family, and that I was spending time away from family and they deserve to have me put forth the effort.

I adore the profession and, being a minority in the class, I wanted to perform at 110%.

I am motivated to do my best work because it is very important to do my best in anything having to do with my future as a social worker. This is my Master's more than anything. It is important and I will do what it takes to get it.

I am self motivated and I always do the best at what I do.

My level of determination I have to succeed in life

I motivate myself to do my best work. I'm not only representing myself as a professional, but also my family.

My diploma and my desire to learn how to work with clients

My competition with other students, personal goals

My A, family

Support from professors and field instructors was very helpful. Also, I have this recurring nightmare about being a 50 year old waitress without a master's degree.

Myself

My respect and high expectations from MOST of the teachers (but not all of them)

### Describe your experience with the PORTFOLIO PROJECTS? Did you find them helpful? Do you have other suggestions for measuring overall student progress? Do you have suggestions for a final capstone project (research thesis, exams, etc)?

My experience I remember in particular is that the portfolio objectives were part of a class assignment and personally I don't think they have been helpful because each professor wants different things for the objectives. All the professors should agree to be on one accord for this assignment. Some professors didn't care and some did.

Though tedious, the portfolio objectives were beneficial to complete as a reminder of knowledge obtained and personal/professional development.

I think this is helpful because each advisor grades differently and all assignments in the portfolio have already been graded and submitted. I feel it is unnecessary to put them all in a notebook. We should do a presentation of what 2 years has been like in front of the students and professors.

tive between advisors – was too varied – expectations were not standard. Not really helpful, it's just a rehash of prior assignments. After all classes would be a good review.

That it is a helpful assignment. It helps to put your work into perspective and allows for reflection.

Disappointed that I was asked to do my portfolio electronically and 2 days before it was due was asked to include a hard copy! But it was stressful! Portfolios are useful to see where we have come from and what we have covered.

An exam that covers material from each class would better measure student knowledge and progress. The portfolios are a summary or overview of what has been done in the courses – this has already been shown by the students' abilities to pass the classes and complete the assignments.

I would have rather taken a test because trying to go back and remember things from past classes was difficult. The assignment could have been split up – do half from the 1<sup>st</sup> semester and complete 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.

I would like it. For all the work we did we should have gotten a grade in each course for it. I would rather do objectives than a thesis.

I liked putting my portfolio together. I find the objectives helpful; they reflect the objectives of the MSW program and general information that students should be aware of as MSW professionals. Students should be given the opportunity to discuss the objectives together.

Portfolios are a true waste of time, no consistency. Every instructor has different agendas. There were people that were insulted by their advisors. It was maddening, frustrating, and the insults were not a good way of showing professional use of self.

A portfolio was a tool used to reflect my learning experiences in the program. It would be great to give students the choice between an exam, or portfolio.

I don't know we even had to do it until a week before classes ended my foundation year. It wasn't helpful to me. All I did was complete what was already done. I think a thesis in the form of a presentation on a topic of the student's choice should be a good measure.

Too much stress, excessive re-write obligations – Portfolio requirements should be more standardized regardless of advisor.

Portfolios were HELL! An exam should be given; therefore there will be the same playing field for everyone.

I hated the portfolio. I really dreaded doing a thesis or a comprehensive exam. But my advisor was very supportive and communicated how other students would have had difficulty with different advisors. I think standardization of evaluation would really improve the process.

It was not easy.

It should be more FAIR. If one person/advisor has a timeline to turn in then they all do.

I was able to feel a sense of success and completion along with gaining insight to application of theory on all levels.

Have you attended another GRADUATE PROGRAM previously? If so, please describe your previous graduate program experience and how it impacted your experience in the MSW program.

Describe your previous WORK EXPERIENCE (years employed, type of work). How do you think your previous work experience impacted your experience in the MSW program?

My previous work experience created the interest to obtain MSW, LMSW, LCSW.

I worked in medical/dental settings. I did not want to go back to my previous settings and not be in a professional capacity. So becoming a professional Social Worker was my driving force for completing this program.

I was employed for 3 years with DFCS and mental health outpatients. I felt I could apply certain class info to my field knowledge.

My work experience gave me an advantage. I was able to share experiences and gain some new ones.

I worked at Phoebe on the Acute Rehab floor. I also worked at Albany Regional Youth Detention Center. The experiences really prepared me to work with teens and people in general.

(I worked 5 yrs.) as a case manager gave me an advanced understanding of child/family issues.

I worked as a waitress at Steak & Shake.

Welfare

Previous work experience helped me to relate practice techniques and theories with more insight.

PARENT? If yes, how has that affected your participation in the MSW program?

was sleepy a lot more often than if I had no children.

was difficult. I was at VSU sometimes until 10 and driving approx. 2 hours to get home around midnight.

did not affect my participation in the MSW program. The MSW program affected my parenting role somewhat.

Give any additional comments or suggestions about the MSW program?

I, it was a very good program and good experience for me.

that the program can be much shorter. I only feel that it is necessary to have one research course. A second research course could be

effective. I also feel that more emphasis should be placed on licensure. Practicums should offer stipends.

Workers are supposed to be compassionate. How can the professors try to teach about compassion but lack it themselves?

a great experience. I am glad I made it to the end of the program.

teaching others to become professionally ethical to practice you should not belittle students along the way during portfolio projects.

enjoyed my experience as a student at VSU. I felt like all of my instructors were approachable and professional.

I imagined how much I would grow personally and professionally as a result of the MSW. I think professors should be held accountable for

their work – why are they not reviewed or supervised? Grades are HIGHLY inflated.

Practicum was awful, it made me rethink my career path. Also, group projects are not good. They are too large and we know how to do them

am due to prior education.

, Felicia, and Allison are great!

**2007 Exit Interview and Focus Group Data**

**Survey Responses – QUANTITATIVE DATA**

0=Does Not Apply; 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree  
 Web=15; On-Campus=18; Overall=33

	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
am satisfied with my graduate experience in MSW program.	4.43	3.35	<b>3.84</b>
program was basically what I expected when I enrolled.	3.57	3.11	<b>3.31</b>
education I received was worth the cost of attending graduate school.	4.29	3.83	<b>4.03</b>
significant changes to my work schedule to participate in the MSW program.	4.57	3.72	<b>4.09</b>
significant changes in my home/family life to participate in the MSW program.	4.50	4.39	<b>4.44</b>
do it all over, I would still attend the MSW program at VSU.	4.29	3.56	<b>3.88</b>
isolation was a problem for me during the MSW program.	3.43	2.44	<b>2.88</b>
I was respected in the MSW program.	4.07	3.22	<b>3.59</b>
I felt isolated during the program.	2.29	2.33	<b>2.31</b>
<b>FEEDBACK</b>	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
work faculty at VSU are supportive of MSW students.	4.71	3.56	<b>4.06</b>
work staff at VSU are supportive of MSW students.	4.86	3.89	<b>4.31</b>
high quality advising during my graduate program.	4.21	3.11	<b>3.59</b>
the social work faculty willing to provide extra assistance when needed.	4.71	3.83	<b>4.22</b>
my interaction with faculty I found professional role models.	4.36	3.50	<b>3.88</b>
my interaction with field instructors I found professional role models.	4.21	3.94	<b>4.06</b>
high quality feedback on academic coursework.	4.50	3.67	<b>4.03</b>
high quality feedback on professional development issues.	4.36	3.78	<b>4.03</b>
high quality feedback during my field practicums.	4.07	4.22	<b>4.16</b>

<b>ELEMENTS</b>	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
mer orientation program was important to my tion to graduate school.	3.36	3.06	<b>3.19</b>
llenged academically during the MSW am.	4.50	4.11	<b>4.28</b>
llenged professionally during the MSW am.	4.36	4.22	<b>4.28</b>
llenged personally during the MSW program.	4.29	4.17	<b>4.22</b>
/ coursework was too difficult.	2.29	2.11	<b>2.19</b>
l, I felt the grades I was given were inflated.	1.50	1.94	<b>1.75</b>
d academically in the MSW program.	2.21	1.83	<b>2.00</b>
cticums were very important to my educational ience.	4.36	4.22	<b>4.28</b>
sified with my field placements.	4.36	3.76	<b>4.03</b>
ork was a valuable learning tool.	2.92	3.28	<b>3.13</b>
<b>MSW</b>	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
that I will be able to apply what I learned g the MSW program.	4.79	4.39	<b>4.56</b>
ed strong relationships with other students in hort.	4.21	4.33	<b>4.28</b>
veloped a strong professional network.	3.93	4.00	<b>3.97</b>
to use social work theories in real-world ions.	4.00	3.56	<b>3.75</b>
t I am prepared to serve clients well as a ssional social worker.	4.50	3.89	<b>4.16</b>
t what I learned in the program has relevance al-world practice.	4.29	3.72	<b>3.97</b>
ident I will find employment in my field of e.	4.57	4.17	<b>4.34</b>



## **WEB HYBRID COHORT**

### *Survey Responses - Qualitative Data*

#### How did you LEARN ABOUT the MSW program?

Did you LEARN ABOUT the MSW program?

Through a friend

Found who was researching graduate programs

Online, online

Searching for MSW programs in Georgia

Internet

Internet

Graduate research while preparing for graduation

Internet

Website

Graduate program

Internet search

Learned about the MSW program from other VSU MSW graduates

Through a licensed professional co-worker

#### How did you DECIDE TO APPLY to the MSW program?

Considered my career and have more career choices

Program

Found one that was flexible and would work with my work schedule

Valdosta and the program offered an online option

Courses looked good and affordable

Wanted an advanced degree in social work because I like the field

Wanted to further education for more career opportunities.

Wanted an LCSW, school social work certificate

Wanted to be in the social service field, providing assistance and help

Needed MSW to "stand alone" in the work I was performing and for job security

In rural Georgia, the web based program was the perfect opportunity to get an MSW without having to travel several evenings

Increased career opportunities, develop more professionally to better serve clients

Because the web based cohort was the only program in Georgia that accommodated my work schedule and I want to be licensed.

Wanted to advance my professional development

Always wanted to obtain a degree in SW, but opportunity did not present itself until 2004 when I learned about the VSU web-based

program.

#### Was FUNDING an important issue for you? Why or why not? Did you receive funding to attend the MSW program? If so, please describe.

Financial aid was used all 3 years

Was IV-E the first 2 years

Student loans

Since I am single, cost was a factor. Received initial small loan to start with; lived carefully and utilized tax refunds thereafter. When VSU changed the fee structure and made web students pay activity and health fees, which we never used. I would have liked to be able to complete without financial aid but had to apply for it during the last half of the program. I did not receive any funding to attend VSU. I paid as I went along, although it was a financial burden, my family made it work. Financial aid was an issue as far as gas and hotel expenses. I struggled with knowing that I needed to stop working to have a more successful experience, but I could not afford to. I received financial aid for seventy-five percent of tuition. That was important but not required. I paid for books, hotel, and etc. Financial aid was not important to me because I received a grant to attend. Financial aid was not a significant issue for me, although I did have to resort to a government loan during my second semester.

What do you KNOW NOW about the MSW program that you wish you had known when you were applying?

The schedule of courses, particularly the summer courses  
I would like to get practicum hours  
There is more class work to an online class than I ever had in a face to face class  
Practicum will take up a lot of your time, working while doing so will be quite difficult. VSU needs to try and understand working is not easy so perhaps more flexible internships can be found.  
The amount of busy work involved in some courses where it seemed to distract from learning applicable skills.  
When we were told it was hard and a lot of work, you all really meant it. Three years is a long time for such an intense program. It would be difficult to work full-time and complete practicum requirements.  
The difference between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year is that the second was such a light load and the third was killer. I used vacation and sick days during my 3<sup>rd</sup> year.  
The challenging and exhausting the MSW program is but I think you just have to experience it for yourself.  
The intensity of the program

Which courses did you find the MOST USEFUL and why?

Practitioner Practice I and II, these courses laid the groundwork for skills that I used in my practicum.  
Counseling skills  
Advanced Practicum Individuals, Groups course, Abused and Neglected, General Practicum I and II, Professional Seminar  
Practice I, HBSE I and II, Psychopathology, Rural Policy Course, Rural Practice I, Practicum Seminar Foundation  
Senior seminar, it prepared us for LMSW testing  
Practitioner Practice courses, had good course content (Dr. Tandy)  
Psychopathology, senior seminar, individuals, groups, and foundation year seminar for practicum: because they helped me develop my clinical skills as well as be a more competent professional and learn more about the population I serve.  
Psychopathology, Management, and Advanced Individuals  
The courses, HBSE I and II, Seminar I and II, foundation and concentration, Research, and school social work practice  
I found the courses valuable based on the instructor. So all were valuable, but Dr. Vodde and Dr. Tandy truly have a grasp of the Web and made distance learning easier.  
The policy classes were very helpful. I think the Human Behavior and the Social Environment classes were useful. The Theory classes help pull things together. They all made me understand how practice involves critical thinking and process besides just taking action to guide social work practice.  
Psychopathology, where I learned how to diagnose and what all of the Axis diagnoses represent.  
Practitioner Practice with Individuals, where I learned about ego functions and how to do a thorough assessment on an individual.

alist Practice I, where I learned how to interview properly and professionally.

Which classes did you find the LEAST USEFUL and why?

I found the research and policy classes the least useful. I know they were important but if you don't want to do research or follow policy closely then it isn't useful. I would have rather spent my time learning about therapeutic aspects.

ings

because the assignments were not all relevant to the overall purpose of the class

Groups I- I felt that Groups II covered enough information that both were not needed

ing class, it was different having all settings classes together

Policy

which I because no guidance made Research II the only research class I had. Settings needs better structure and a method for feeling points.

First I believe the research class should suffice for the MSW program. Second, research classes are too much; I've never used a research class in my work.

The Settings (Mental Health) class course material was conglomerated with the other special settings courses and I found no value

When designing the MSW CURRICULUM, what would you add, remove, or change? Please be specific.

I would have offered more elective classes. I feel that we did not have a good variety of choices offered to us.

more statistics

graduates don't know how to interpret statistics given in articles

I would make electives available after the end of the first year. The electives are the classes I actually wanted to take and I wish I could have more of them, but they were limited. I would make some available during the 2<sup>nd</sup> year when the course load was so low.

I would put policy and research towards the beginning and not bunch it all together in the end.

For web classes required more "busy" work than when attending class, I would also change some elective classes and have them available for web students during the summer to lighten the third year load.

Practical practice leading groups in the groups course

There is a way to balance out the amount of courses in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years. The 2<sup>nd</sup> year is kind of light and the 3<sup>rd</sup> year is heavy.

I would put the research classes back to back in semesters

It would be able to take electives your first year during the summer to help lighten the load would have been very helpful.

Information on Gerontology and Bereavement work

More opportunities to take many of the elective courses. A main course in gerontology

should focus on diversity but never directly address issues related to the elderly, bereaved, or disabled and we are guaranteed to not enter those populations.

I think Career Day should be mandatory. It should be strongly encouraged but not mandatory.

More emphasis on Research and more on grief and bereavement! Not all social workers will conduct research, but the likelihood of death and the issue of grief and death are far greater.

Which room or web TEACHING TECHNIQUES were most helpful for you?

I liked the narrated Cd's because they were very helpful

the discussions and the ability for work to be posted online

points, Online notes, Class lectures, Movies, Rubrics, Discussions

ing skills and case studies

T/Vista was great for discussions, emails, etc.

ed from watching role plays in the first year of the program and practicing with Individual Counseling responses.

ective class teaching worked well

sion and power points were found to be most helpful.

ed power points were very helpful. Discussion was organized and easy to understand. Dr. Vodde's Cd with the videos were av

ndy's therapy video was great.

points that included voice lectures

liked Dr. Vodde's and Tandy's style of teaching. The power points were clearly written and discussion postings were very help

onally know of cases of ACADEMIC DISHONESTY during the MSW program? If yes, please describe. Do have suggestions about  
ying and dealing with academic dishonesty?

th anyone still in the program, meaning who didn't quit before graduation. But I know of one who didn't do the BCR skills with  
e their family and made up people for their PSA assignments and didn't write up themselves. But that person quit that semest  
ys.

earsay of other students getting caught

ot aware of any.

ive any issues or DIFFICULTIES with professors during your program? If yes, please describe the issue(s) and how you worked it

ometimes the course material didn't fit the topic.

sors answered questions when I questioned them on grades or material.

onally didn't

some were a little gruff at times, but no major issues.

th professors, but I did with my field instructor. Thanks to the help from VSU faculty, I was able to work thru [sic] it.

ATIVATED YOU to do your best work in the MSW program?

sire to have an excellent G.P.A.

sire to learn stuff I could use during work and practicum

elf expectations

al drive and desire

ed to complete the program. It wasn't until after I started the program that I realized exactly how valuable this degree will be  
d result, a LCSW and possibility of a better job

ers because you always want to fall somewhere in the middle or above your classmates when it comes to academic performance. I met professor expectations that you are prepared to understand material and work. I was confident in the information and the desire to finish degree. I have a high level of expectations related to myself. I wanted to be successful both professionally and personally and I knew I had to do the work to achieve it. I received support from classmates and professors!

*Describe your experience with the PORTFOLIO PROJECTS? Did you find them helpful? Do you have other suggestions for measuring overall progress? Do you have suggestions for a final capstone project (research thesis, exams, etc)?*

All advisors had the same guidelines for students concerning completing their portfolios. Putting my portfolio on disk in PDF, very professional. I will use it in the future. I think we should have been asked to buy the adobe program for PDF. I think it should have been incorporated into class time, not the concept of the portfolio being on a Cd. The portfolio was okay, Dr. Tandy was an excellent instructor and very knowledgeable. The portfolio was very difficult to put into Adobe. The requirements to complete the portfolio were not an issue, but putting it into Adobe did not want to buy the program for a one time use and living out of town makes it difficult to use the computer lab on campus. It was helpful practicing and turning in sections at a time. Communication between instructors and advisors needs to be clear as to what is expected. The portfolio was different and gives the student the chance to reflect on their progress while doing it. In the web cohort, it may be useful to introduce the portfolio from day one and each year has a portfolio that by the end, you just add to your experience. And grade how they progressed so it wouldn't be so overwhelming. The portfolio project was helpful. I was very glad that you placed Adobe on social work computers. It is not fair to ask us to buy the software for one assignment. I think that the portfolio projects are more beneficial than a thesis or exams to measure overall progress because you get an opportunity to state how you have grown and where you may still need improvement. I would have had a better understanding of the portfolio prior to beginning classes. I thought the PDF portfolio to be very easy. Dr. Tandy provided excellent guidance and technical support. It is extremely helpful to be able to add several times to organize course work into folders. The portfolio projects were very helpful, but extremely time consuming and I had a difficulty putting it into .pdf. I would have rather done a thesis than the portfolio projects. I was disappointed this was a portfolio program, you should give students the opportunity to do a thesis. The portfolio projects were pretty good experience. I did not like how we had to convert the concentration portfolio to .pdf when all our work had been in word. The portfolio is a good capstone project. There are some problems.

*Have you attended another GRADUATE PROGRAM previously? If so, please describe your previous graduate program experience and how it influenced your experience in the MSW program.*

From my other program I was able to incorporate much of the same information to this program.

asn't as thorough and practice based, but helped in preparing for the amount of work required.

another MA and I can't compare. I was in class and did not work during that MA. I knew what this work load would be and how it would differ from a BA program.

The previous graduate program I attended was not as challenging as this MSW program. My experience at VSU made me appreciate it even more.

*Describe your previous WORK EXPERIENCE (years employed, type of work). How do you think your previous work experience impacted your participation in the MSW program?*

I worked at DFCS the first two years of the program. Through working there I met a social worker and realized that this is what I wanted to do. After working at DFCS for five years, I feel that I was at an advantage coming into the program with real world experience.

I also worked in mental health for five years. I knew that I didn't want to be in mental health forever and my MSW experience gave me more options. Through my practicum I found another field I was interested in that I never knew existed.

My experience with DFCS – this program fine tuned my work experience and gave me more tools for my tool box.

I also worked with foster care, which gave me a good foundation for reference and application.

I also worked in case management with children and families. It helped a lot that I had some ideas on what social work is and the professional experience definitely helped me.

I also worked in social services. I think it made the program easier as I had experience to compare context to, some with no work experience in the area seemed to struggle more.

Case management- I feel like I now know what I'm doing despite my beliefs that I was ahead of the game upon entering.

Health, Hospice, nursing home; my work experience enabled me to grow more professionally during the program.

I had 13 years of working in the mental health system. This provided me with a tremendous foundation in my experience and skills.

I had many jobs in the past and it made a difference. A lot of the material was not new to me. I worked very hard because that's what I do.

I did have some difficulty with the social policy. I had most of the material in the past.

I also worked as a foster care worker with DFCS and intake clinician with mental health. The experience was helpful.

*PARENT? If yes, how has that affected your participation in the MSW program?*

I do not start studying until after 9 p.m., once the kids are in bed. My children stay with their dad so babysitting was ok. I had a lot of support during graduate school unplanned.

I missed important functions that as a mom I needed to attend such as my daughter's graduation.

That's why I choose web based so I could work after my kids went to bed, sometimes challenging when one of my children would be sick. I had my baby during the most difficult of semesters, fortunately, I had a great deal of support and encouragement from family, friends, and peers that made the semester a little easier.

I would not have ever been able to complete the program without the support from my husband and parents. I missed many of my children's events due to class on the weekends.

have had to be more cognizant of how I managed my time to make sure that he was as least disrupted as possible. It did not affect my participation in the program.

It was extremely difficult being a parent and attending the MSW program. Child care situations and missing or neglecting child's needs were a big part in this program. Decisions making such as struggling with if your child is sick to stay home and care for them or risk the consequences of missing class.

Distance has affected my participation tremendously! I have missed several sporting events and I had to miss my daughter's wedding reception.

Give any additional comments or suggestions about the MSW program?

Need more comfortable seating in classrooms and more paper towels in the bathroom. Also no group work and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of first semester was a bit tiring.

Advertising us an online program, be prepared to provide the proper supervision to students who live far away with the same supervision as those who are close by.

Improvement on practicum placements and the quality of placements needs to be addressed. Web students also have the difficulty of not being able to attend meetings so more information and contact with web students needs to be offered when we are here.

Need more instruction on dealing with bereavement which I think we will all deal with in practice. Not allowed to take electives but just one subject was required. Did not allow us to expand into individual interest and there are no other opportunities to take these electives. Being required to attend a job fair when I live two and a half hours away and nothing in my area was represented at the job fair. With the rotating schedule, shorter class times meant that we would get out early and have 3 hours before the next class. This is frustrating for those of us living hours away. If you keep the rotating schedule, perhaps you can keep the shorter seminar courses at the end.

Need more paper towels in the bathroom.

Good program and professors, everyone willing to help wherever needed; great support staff, very organized.

Very impressed and shocked about how personable and thoughtful MSW faculty are. I value my experience in this program for so many reasons, but especially because the professors were able to challenge me professionally and personally, while simultaneously showing that they genuinely cared for my well being.

Need to keep a weed out class at the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> year. Quit scheduling web weekends on homecoming, this happened all three years. No hotels, no places to eat or park. Somehow you should put some of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year classes in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. 3<sup>rd</sup> year almost did me in. Group work is not possible with a web based cohort.

Strongly feel that there was not enough cohesiveness between the face-to-face and the web-based class. Big group assignments were very difficult for students due to living in different areas of the state.

### **ON CAMPUS COHORT**

#### *Survey Responses - Qualitative Data*

How did you LEARN ABOUT the MSW program?

Through an MSW intern doing her concentration placement at my undergraduate site.

Information in the program.

Information from my undergrad

Faculty members speaking to my undergraduate class.

Through my research and pursuit of a Master's

Program and up accredited GA MSW programs

My previous work with social workers

My previous work

Information from presentation at Thomas University

d

recommendations from alumni

former MSW graduate

Regina and Dr. White came to a Psychology club meeting and discussed the program.

Professor told me about the field of Social Work and directed me to VSU

Do you DECIDE TO APPLY to the MSW program?

I wanted to become a social worker.

to further my education.

Quality

My long-term plan is to receive my LCSW and an MSW is a necessary part to achieving that goal.

I heard good things about the program, about Dr. White, Dr. Vodde, and Dr. Meacham. I heard that the entire staff was supportive.

I was ready to learn a skill and make more money. I wanted to further my education.

More general than MFT, psych. Degrees, more versatile.

To advance my knowledge and make more money in my field

presentation

I wanted to further my education by getting my MSW degree

My undergrad in sociology is a waste. Can't do much with it.

I wanted to pursue a career where I could help people and would allow me to have an opportunity to pursue different job

opportunities.

To learn more skills and improve the skills I already possessed as a social worker.

To help make a positive difference in people's lives.

FUNDING an important issue for you? Why or why not? Did you receive funding to attend the MSW program? If so, please describe.

Graduate Assistantship.

Except for surprise cost: i.e. Adobe.

It is not expensive to attend VSU when compared to the cost of attending a private university. Yes, IV-E grant.

Thankfully my husband's job provided support for us while I attended school.

Important issue. I was offered funding to 2 other schools, but still chose VSU because I felt the faculty here was caring and would give me more individual attention.

I applied for loans that I will have to pay back Stafford, both subsidized and unsubsidized.

Veteran's Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation program paid for my tuition.

Waiver of state tuition

My parents paid for my degree

Used loans. The only way to pay for school.

Because I applied for student loans and I was a graduate assistant.

Funding was not an issue for me. My husband was able to pay the fees.



only working part time. The mileage to and from practicums, school, and home added up quickly. As did the cost for daycare.

What do you KNOW NOW about the MSW program that you wish you had known when you were applying?

about DFCS, IVE, and other work-site placements

organization, the fact that the program does not promote flexibility and is so rigid.

flexibility of the faculty and the program overall. I felt only one of two professors actually cared about my success.

demanding the program is.

My professor is not as willing to help, listen, understand as I initially thought

I would like for all the professors to understand that once a student gets to this level, they are adults and should be treated as such.

I would have known more about the practicums and portfolio.

The program has a general focus. Most MSW programs such as UGA and FSU have tracks that you can choose to participate in.

My track is in policy administration and macro practice. The VSU MSW focuses mainly on clinical and rural work. My interest is urban work.

I wish the program gave you an option to choose.

I would have the same teachers throughout, that there were no elective choices, and only 1 track if that is what it was.

I would have come here because I hear the same issues exist at other MSW programs.

I was not thoroughly informed of the demands prior to attending.

You did not provide all the information I needed when I applied

Your program's impact on your personal life is a factor in this program.

MSW Work is a very challenging and intense field.

Late nights. For people that live 30 to 50 miles or more away from campus, they have to drive home late at night. This could be dangerous.

Expensive it was!!!

What courses did you find the MOST USEFUL and why?

Practicum, Groups (Practice, with groups/individuals), and both seminars.

Psychopathology, HBSE II, Psychopathology.

Practicum- field experience and clinical feedback.

Psychopathology- learned to use DSM IV

Psychopathology- It seemed more applicable to real-life situations than any other courses. It allowed for role play.

Psychopathology- Each Evaluation, this course was challenging. It further encouraged me to attend each class in order to succeed, unlike any of the other courses.

Psychopathology, also the course with the Ego defenses/ Karen Case- don't remember the name. I felt this class has been better in terms of the professor teaching it. Our class had a different professor this year and I felt "let down" by what we were taught.

Practicum- really, my practicums were useful because of the experience and the seminar class I had with Dr. Vodde.

Psychopathology- professor had high expectations and presented a lot of material.

Practicum- General Practicum I

Practicum- Vodde- Practicum Seminar

Practicum- Hillman- Policy Classes

Practicum- Wojcik- Research (Advanced)

Practicum- these classes, how to relate to others and apply

ation helped me to analyze where I was weak academically with regards to social work. It also helped prepare me to start this professional social worker.

pathology is something every social worker needs to know how to diagnose and interpret the diagnosis.

pathology, research, and intro technology

alist Practice 1 and 2- learned basic counseling responses and learned about conducting a needs assessment.

and 2- learned about different theoretical frameworks

ced Practice- learning different methods for working with individuals and families

lasses

um Seminar was wonderful!

uals- because I could focus on micro social work

ses did you find the LEAST USEFUL and why?

ch, material was not thorough.

alist practice I, no actual practice and role play of clinical skills just threw us out there.

ch- I feel if one is not going into the research aspect of social work, then it is a waste of time to take two classes of research.

I do not feel I prepared academically as it relates to theory. I am disappointed that we did not have Vodde for at least one HBSE

es where we only reviewed power points. Diversity of assignments would have helped us to comprehend the material better

e in Groups

ll, teachers showed favoritism, read power points to us, told stories about themselves. The program was a waste of time to me

se no focus was on the licensing exam.

and HBSE II- I felt I learned the least from these courses and was truly disappointed because this is what I expected to learn th

d that theories were extremely glossed over many times in the semester. Groups I and II, all we were presented with was icel

ch because I do not want to use this in work placement

technology class; it was a waste of time; one should already know how to operate a computer before entry in to such a program

policy 2 and Groups 2

d all the courses to be useful

courses- There seemed to be no structure to the class

courses- I couldn't apply what we learned in the classroom. I needed a class with more interaction and real life experiences.

ole playing

designing the MSW CURRICULUM, what would you add, remove or change? Please be specific.

d make program objectives and portfolio requirements cohesive across the board.

supportive staff regarding nontraditional employed students. More understanding of time and time management.

d focus more on practicing clinical skills. Power points are no substitute for experience in a safe environment. All our experie

d and that's not safe!

d allow Vodde to teach both HBSE. I would inform all students that they have a voice should anything happen.

ptions for specific fields such as international social work

d add specific tracks that students could choose from.

of the teachers! Class time was a joke. While some fostered creative thinking those experiences were from homework assignments. We read power points for 3 hours. Also 2 tracks: One for clinical and one for administration.

Concentration Practicum Seminar

Having same professors for 6 classes

Portfolio, would rather write a thesis!

Hands on experience, not just with practicum but with other courses

Not see the use of two research classes.

Bought too many books that were not mentioned or used. If they are not used, please request that we buy them.

Should add more individual and family interpersonal communication sessions and role playing. More hands on micro work. Switch

Last semester and research first semester of concentration year.

Room or web TEACHING TECHNIQUES were most helpful for you?

Points

Not lectures; WEBCT was not helpful when it came to posts and discussions.

Flays- There were not many offered during the program.

Proch, when he explained a new technique. At the end of class he allowed students to ask questions. He did not just read slides "copy work" like some of the other professors.

Projects

Application discussions

Got out of groups and seminar classes where the instructor would discuss problems of the students.

Application type assignments

Much emphasis was placed on emails and WebCT

Manner in which some professors made us apply concepts, theories, and ideas taught in class to assignments. This helped me learn the material.

Role playing

Interactive exercises

Discussions

Personally know of cases of ACADEMIC DISHONESTY during the MSW program? If yes, please describe. Do have suggestions about preventing and dealing with academic dishonesty?

Think the students have a responsibility of their own to get what they can out of the program. Just letting students know its not available is my suggestion.

One student forgot an assignment was due, lied to the professor and said she emailed it to him then asked her neighbor what it was. The professor allowed her to email it to him again later.

that I am aware of.

ally, although we became almost paranoid about citing and referencing because of the plagiarism “freak out”

Have any issues or DIFFICULTIES with professors during your program? If yes, please describe the issue(s) and how you worked it

that they did often show favoritism. Also many would read evaluations and bring them up the following semester to us and make comments like, “Why would you say that?” Or have test questions that asked us to evaluate the class.

had to just drop it. Focused on just graduating- decided it was not worth the stress at the time. As a result I became less motivated and lowered my standards, which I felt was encouraged to just do the minimum.

one was unfamiliar with the style of teaching from Dr. Dybicz. During our last semester it was very hard to conform to his style.

many of the professors have a hard time communicating their thoughts which makes it very difficult to learn the material they teach. Some teachers were easier to communicate with than others. Some did not clearly define their expectations.

In my past semester I had a difficulty with a professor. During the beginning of the semester, I was really struggling on the assignments I was required to do. I worked really hard on these assignments and was not happy with the grades I received on these assignments. Therefore, I scheduled an appointment to talk to the professor about my feelings and that really seemed to help.

MOTIVATED YOU to do your best work in the MSW program?

The fact that I had so much invested into the program and that I wanted a career in the field of school social work.

High personal expectations

I was motivated to achieve goals. Although the program was a disappointment overall. I was determined to make the most of it.

I always do my best.

I wanted to succeed. The fact that my classmates wanted to make A's, it became a friendly competition.

I had personal goals for my future

I wanted to graduate with a high GPA. I was also motivated to get an advanced degree.

Education

I was not motivated much. Most of the time I felt de-motivated by professors.

Dr. Dybicz, Dr. Tandy, and Dr. Vodde: High expectations that motivated me the most.

Knowing that it would pay off. This is unlike undergraduate school because it is what you know you want to do for the rest of your life.

I wanted to learn the things so I can be effective in the real world.

I wanted to set a standard for other students at Thomas University to follow. Also I wanted to show my children that what I expect of myself.

The challenges that were provided by the faculty provided that.

My classmates!

Wanting to get a better job!

My family and friends

well in this program was a personal issue as far as academics are concerned. I was also motivated by providing my children with a better life. I was also motivated because I wanted to be a better, more effective social worker for my clients sake. The value of working with and helping people through difficult situations in their lives

*What was your experience with the PORTFOLIO PROJECTS? Did you find them helpful? Do you have other suggestions for measuring overall student progress? Do you have suggestions for a final capstone project (research thesis, exams, etc)?*

Portfolio projects were great!

Portfolio was an absolute nightmare. ADOBE added anxiety, stress, and excessive time and cost to the project. It was not helpful at all. Just another project to write about what we learned instead of actually demonstrating what we learned. We were not notified of Adobe in advance. We weren't trained on it and it took hours.

I hated the portfolio. I think it was the biggest waste of time. It was not helpful to me one bit. I think if a student can maintain good grades that they have learned, or at least met the qualifications set forth by the division. Student progress can be measured by exams. It was trying to figure out how to tell one that they have learned in the portfolio.

First, finding out about Acrobat at the last moment. Second, my advisor provided no feedback until like April. I hated the portfolios and felt they were helpful. I would have liked to have more feedback on them from my advisor. I was shocked that the portfolio was through Adobe added additional stress. I don't own a computer so I constantly had to struggle in order to use someone else's computer to get the portfolio completed.

It was helpful to have it due in sections, but my advisor would not give me prompt or much feedback. I know he received the portfolios because I put read receipts on them. Also he told me he just cared about the narratives not the artifacts so what was the point? I feel I wasted 140 dollars on a useless program. I think the portfolio should be re-evaluated. I'll never look at the cd again.

Not really helpful, I'd rather due a research thesis or take an exam. However I feel with this option fewer students would graduate. I thought it was unfair that this class was the "trial" class for Adobe Acrobat. No one was aware that the program had to be used for the portfolio ahead of time. The cost was high, but we all had to do it to be able to graduate.

Portfolios were difficult. I don't know when I would use it. Maybe an exam like the board exam would be better.

With the new Adobe system, it terrified me because of the extra cost, which I did not have. I did find the portfolio helpful, but it felt like we were just sort of thrown in on us.

Portfolios were a great professional tool. However, revisions should have been turned in WORD documents rather than a final pdf. I HATE ADOBE.

I don't like the fact that we had to do the portfolio electronically because I was worried that I could not afford the Adobe software. However, I really appreciate the faculty requesting for IT employees to install the software on some of the computers. Overall, I found the portfolio project to be very useful.

The content asked for in the portfolio projects were fine. The planning and explaining for the format we were required to use was tedious. There was no structure, and no answers to some questions about ADOBE.

Thank you for making us turn in sections of our portfolio at a time. However, I recommend doing objectives in word or excel and only converting it to .pdf once it has been approved by a faculty advisor.

*Have you attended another GRADUATE PROGRAM previously? If so, please describe your previous graduate program experience and how it influenced your experience in the MSW program.*

our previous WORK EXPERIENCE (years employed, type of work). How do you think your previous work experience impacted your experience in the MSW program?

en's programs and after school programs for 2-3 years.

elfare for 3 years. This enhanced my experience.

s in child welfare

s not for my previous work experiences and life experiences, I would have been totally lost in this program. My work experiences 6 years of mental health, high school, technical college, and DFCS social service agencies.

en in the workforce for 15 years. However, as a college graduate I've been in it for eight. I think it gave me reference points to the material from class.

worked in mental health for 6 years. I think the degree I will get after graduation/licensure will help me because of the expectations counselors have today. I attended the program because of my desire to be a better mental health professional.

worked all my life. I have been in the military also. I found that the core values are similar and it impacts the way I appreciate through the program.

previous work experience gave me a good foundation in which to draw from.

matter what a person does as an occupation; having a background knowledge of social work is very beneficial.

s employed in Social Work field, this went hand in hand with the program

or of HeadStart for 3 years, this taught me life skills

rs of prior work experience, work ethics and appropriate office behavior

PARENT? If yes, how has that affected your participation in the MSW program?

has been a total strain on my family. I have not been available to my children even when I am home.

have a ten month old. The time that I had to spend in the MSW program affected my child because I could not spend enough time with them that I needed to. It's hard to juggle being a parent and working and attending school, but it will be worth it after graduation.

had to talk to my children about the demands of the program. As a parent I tried to normalize life for them as much as possible by continuing with after school activities and setting aside weekend fun time.

parent. There were times when I did not participate in class events because I had to take care of my children. I didn't get a lot of sleep. At times, I had to turn in things late.

Give any additional comments or suggestions about the MSW program?

job overall. Emphasize the importance of networking.

is intended to be accessible and yet rarely was open after 5 or available at other times.

missed Dr. Dybicz's class because we would fail if we did. The information was vital. Make class worth while and an attendance policy not be necessary. Also, it would be great to have tracks as it is I feel I know a little about everything and a lot about nothing. I wanted to leave here feeling much more comfortable and confident.

too hard. Social Work is common sense and it should not be so demanding. Most professors do not have any empathy for the students. They want to teach us to be empathetic. They need to practice what they preach. I feel I would have done better in medical school. Overall the program challenged me. Dr. White was always a source of encouragement both in class and out. Please do not devalue the classes of Dr. Vodde's knowledge and wit by not allowing students to take him; his reputation precedes him.

involvement or appearances by the director.

of my main attractions to the program during my research prior to applying was the elective courses that were offered, primarily in the area of research. I was very disappointed to learn that the elective was not offered. What disappoints me even more is that this elective is still listed on the program website as a possible course. If you are not going to offer this course then do not advertise it. That is really disrespectful. I was told to contact a professor knowledgeable in that particular subject area in order to take an independent study on grant. I was advised on what professor to contact and contacting him. I was told by him that he would not give an independent study to more students who were interested. This shouldn't matter however if the course is being advertised.

Academic programs and schools do not make changes to their handbooks/programs constantly. It is done once a year. When you are in the program under one handbook or policy it does not change or affect you. That said the attendance policy was crap. It adds more stress. People choose to be in this program and will most likely be in class unless they are sick or have family issues. Most programs have more understanding than this program. I cannot express how disgusted I am by the policy. I would have chosen another program if I had my place when I applied. I understand we need to be here, but it is too strict and should not have begun in the middle of the year. The concentration year. Professor seminars could have easily been offered Monday nights when we did not have class for 2 hours instead of Wednesday nights 5 hours. No electives were offered. Same teachers for 4 semesters and summer, bad idea. We were treated poorly, especially with attendance policy. Only one track, most individuals I have spoken to have never heard of this. Professors do not read or respond in a timely manner to emails.

In several situations, I felt that I was discouraged by certain faculty to advocate for change and collaborate with others. This was especially true when we are taught in class to do these things. I was very disappointed by the low expectations and lack of challenge of the program. The thing that affected me most was that I felt that I had no voice.

Changes took place mid semester and should have been implemented at the beginning of the program or not at all!

I do think that this is a great program but I feel that the faculty should be more diverse and have professors of different races and ethnicities to appeal to all students.

I absolutely love that I was admitted to this program. I feel that I'm where I'm supposed to begin my life. I cannot tell you how much I've learned and how much more and I love that! I'll never stop learning or self-monitoring or growing.

**2008 Exit Interview and Data**

**Survey Responses – QUANTITATIVE DATA**

0=Does Not Apply; 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree  
Web=17; On-Campus=13; Overall=30

	WEB	Campus	Overall
I am satisfied with my graduate experience in MSW program.	4.53	3.69	<b>4.17*</b>
MSW program was basically what I expected when I enrolled.	3.71	3.38	<b>3.57</b>
MSW education I received was worth the cost of attending graduate school.	4.53	3.08	<b>3.90*</b>
MSW made significant changes to my work schedule to participate in the MSW program.	3.94	4.31	<b>4.10</b>
MSW made significant changes in my home/family life to participate in the MSW program.	4.47	4.31	<b>4.40</b>
If I had to do it all over, I would still attend the MSW program at VSU.	4.41	3.92	<b>4.20</b>
Financial aid was a problem for me during the MSW program.	2.82	3.00	<b>2.90</b>
I felt I was respected in the MSW program.	4.47	3.67	<b>4.14</b>
I felt I was isolated during the program.	1.94	2.15	<b>2.03</b>
<b>FEEDBACK</b>	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
MSW work faculty at VSU are supportive of MSW students.	4.53	3.46	<b>4.07*</b>
MSW work staff at VSU are supportive of MSW students.	4.53	3.85	<b>4.23*</b>
I received good quality advising during my graduate program.	3.59	3.77	<b>3.67</b>
MSW social work faculty willing to provide extra assistance when needed.	4.18	4.00	<b>4.10</b>
Through my interaction with faculty I found good professional role models.	4.24	3.62	<b>3.97</b>
Through my interaction with field instructors I found good professional role models.	4.18	3.77	<b>4.00</b>
I received good quality feedback on academic coursework.	4.47	3.77	<b>4.17*</b>
I received good quality feedback on professional development issues.	4.47	3.38	<b>4.00*</b>
I received good quality feedback during my field practicums.	4.14	3.92	<b>4.20</b>



<b>STATEMENTS</b>	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Pre-orientation program was important to my transition to graduate school.	4.00	3.15	<b>3.62*</b>
Challenged academically during the MSW program.	4.83	3.31	<b>4.17*</b>
Challenged professionally during the MSW program.	4.82	3.92	<b>4.43*</b>
Challenged personally during the MSW program.	4.88	4.23	<b>4.60*</b>
MSW coursework was too difficult.	2.18	2.00	<b>2.10</b>
Overall, I felt the grades I was given were inflated.	1.53	2.85	<b>2.10*</b>
Struggled academically in the MSW program.	2.00	1.62	<b>1.83</b>
Practicums were very important to my educational experience.	4.59	4.46	<b>4.53</b>
Satisfied with my field placements.	4.24	4.00	<b>4.13</b>
Fieldwork was a valuable learning tool.	4.18	2.92	<b>3.63*</b>
<b>MSW</b>	<b>WEB</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Confident that I will be able to apply what I learned during the MSW program.	4.76	4.15	<b>4.50*</b>
Developed strong relationships with other students in cohort.	4.35	4.62	<b>4.47</b>
Developed a strong professional network.	4.00	3.69	<b>3.87</b>
Confident to use social work theories in real-world situations.	4.18	3.54	<b>3.90*</b>
Confident I am prepared to serve clients well as a professional social worker.	4.29	4.00	<b>4.17</b>
Confident that what I learned in the program has relevance to real-world practice.	4.65	3.85	<b>4.30*</b>
Confident I will find employment in my field of interest.	4.47	3.62	<b>4.10*</b>

Differences were noted as significant if p-values were .10 or lower.

### *Survey Responses - Qualitative Data*

Room or web TEACHING TECHNIQUES were most helpful for you? Be specific.

Students indicated that interactive discussions and small group worked were very helpful. Additionally, narrative PowerPoint notes, interactive videos, and interactive WebCT discussion were good teaching techniques. Students also appreciated feedback on papers.

MSW degree made you more competitive in the job market? Be specific.

Most students believe the degree has made them more marketable in the program. Two on-campus students had concerns about finding a MSW related job after completing the MSW degree.

Are there any additional comments regarding the MSW program?

On-campus students appreciated the fact that classes were offered at night, but would like to have seen varied teaching methods. Most students felt that the third year of the web program should be divided in half and the first and second year of the web should be condensed. Some students felt that the portfolio requirement should be changed. Most students thought that more licensing information should be provided. Majority of the students agreed that the MSW faculty were supportive.