

**Outcome Assessment Report, 2017-2018  
NMHU Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Program**

**Program Mission:**

Consistent with the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) set forth by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the Mission of the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work is to educate students to practice social work competently with the diverse, multicultural populations of New Mexico and the Southwest. This context of cultural and regional responsiveness informs the School's creation and implementation of all its educational programs. The School has a primary commitment to Hispanic and Native American people. The Social Work curriculum at NMHU strives to ground students in core professional social work values, skills and ethical principles, with a focus on promoting awareness and respect for cultural and gender differences and how poverty affects the well-being of people in the region.

**Student Learning Outcome 1:**

**Assessment: Research Proposal, SW430, Research Methods 2**

For this assignment, students read at least 3 peer-reviewed research journal articles on the topic, and use the findings of this literature review and their own practice experience to craft a research question, something they would like to answer by collecting data. Next, they use the findings of this short literature review, and their own knowledge of ethical and maximally valid research methods, to plan a research project to gather data on the topic and then communicate this plan by completing a research proposal for the NMHU Institutional Review Board (IRB).

**CSWE Competencies demonstrated in this assignment:**

- CSWE Competency # 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

**NMHU Traits demonstrated in this assignment:**

- Trait # 1: Use of Technology
- Trait # 2: Content Knowledge

**Summary of Data:**

Number of Students Assessed	64 (45% of all students enrolled)
Number of Students Meeting Benchmark	61 (95% of all students assessed)
Number of Students Not meeting the Benchmark	3 (5% of students assessed)

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 1:**

Student performance on the Research Proposal Assignment was determined to be proficient, or achieving benchmark, if a score of at least 80% was achieved. Of the 64, or 45%, of students for whom scores were provided, 61, or 95%, achieved this benchmark. Performance on this assignment was not used as an indicator of student outcomes in previous years, so no trend data is available. There is significant and problematic non-reporting, with no scores provided for 55% of the students. Most

notably, there was no data provided by Albuquerque or Rio Rancho instructors, despite that these centers have the largest share of total students.

Given the major limitations associated with such a high level of missing data, the fact that 95% of student scores recorded indicated proficiency is commendable. While this high level of student mastery of research knowledge and skills may very well indicate real success in this course, it should be noted that the broad summary-scores granted for this assignment do not allow for a closer examination of where students need further development. That is, while social work competency in the area of research, and academic competency in the areas of use of technology and research content knowledge, were demonstrated in this assignment, we cannot determine from this data which skills need improvement. Further, with so many of those students for whom we have data achieving the benchmark, assignment grades are likely not a sensitive enough indicator of student learning needs. Thus, a lower benchmark may better identify directions for program improvement. Despite all of these limitations, it does appear as if students are demonstrating a degree of success in their use of technology and content knowledge related to social work research.

### **Student Learning Outcome 2:**

#### **Assessment: Family Film Assessment, SW465, Social Work Practice 3**

This assignment challenges students to apply the family levels of need and family intervention approaches presented in the textbook to a family from an entertainment film. In a written report, students summarize the film, and then apply a model of assessment discussed in the text book. Next, they critically evaluate the family's needs and strengths, and write a treatment plan.

#### **CSWE Competencies demonstrated in this assignment:**

- CSWE Competency # 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations & Communities

#### **NMHU Traits demonstrated in this assignment:**

- Trait # 2: Content Knowledge
- Trait # 3: Critical Thinking

#### **Summary of Data:**

Number of Students Assessed	148 (99% of students enrolled)
Number of Students Meeting Benchmark	126 (85% of students assessed)
Number of Students Not meeting the Benchmark	22 (15% of students assessed)

#### **Interpretation of Results for Outcome 2:**

Student performance on the Family Film Assessment was determined to be proficient, or achieving benchmark, if a score of at least 80% was achieved. Of the 148 students for whom scores were provided, 126, or 85%, achieved this benchmark. Note that performance on this assignment was not used as an indicator of student outcomes in previous years, so no trend data is available. We do have complete data on this

indicator, with all instructors providing scores for all students but one, who was granted an Incomplete.

While this high level of student mastery of social work practice assessment skills seems to indicate success in this course, as described above, we acknowledge that the broad summary-scores granted for this assignment do not allow for a closer examination of where students need further development. That is, while social work competency in the area of client assessment, and academic competency in the areas of content knowledge and critical thinking were demonstrated in this assignment, we cannot determine from this data which skills need further development. Unlike the previous indicator, we do have some students struggling with this assignment, about 15%, and thus, further attention to the particular dimensions where students struggle is warranted. The planned use of more targeted measures in future years will help identify these and will enable program improvements. That said, it does appear as if students are demonstrating some success in their critical thinking and application of assessment-related content knowledge, and in their practice of assessment at the family system level.

### **Student Learning Outcome 3:**

#### **Assessment: Legal Research Assignment, SW331, Law & Ethics**

For this assignment, students analyze the case of Tarasoff vs. University of California, Berkley, et al. (1976), applying a legal framework, and analyzing values, ethical standards and relevant laws and regulations. Using an ethical decision-making framework, the relevant sections of the New Mexico Social Work Practice Act, and relevant areas of the NASW Code of Ethics, students critically analyze how the case has influenced New Mexico social workers and policy outcomes, and their ethical and legal responsibilities. Students further assess how supervision and working in inter-professional teams are demonstrated in a historical context and explore their own professionalism in practice and in their communications.

#### **CSWE Competencies demonstrated in this assignment:**

- CSWE Competency # 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

#### **NMHU Traits demonstrated in this assignment:**

- Trait # 2: Content Knowledge
- Trait # 3: Critical Thinking

#### **Summary of Data:**

Number of Students Assessed	36 (27% of all students enrolled)
Number of Students Meeting Benchmark	26 (72% of students assessed)
Number of Students Not meeting the Benchmark	10 (28% of students assessed)

#### **Interpretation of Results for Outcome 3:**

Student performance on the Legal Research Assignment was determined to be proficient, or achieving benchmark, if a score of at least 80% was achieved. Of the 36

students for whom scores were provided, 26, or 72%, achieved this benchmark. Of the 10 who did not achieve benchmark, 3 received a score of 0, likely indicating they did not complete the assignment. These have been counted amongst those not achieving proficiency. Note that data was not provided for a full 73% of students, and no data was retrieved from the Farmington center. Thus, the value of these results are in question.

Performance on this assignment was used as an indicator of student outcomes in 2016-2017. At that time, just less than 90% achieved the benchmark, indicating proficiency. Thus, there has been a sizable drop in the percent proficient. It is not known whether this indicates a decline in instructional or student competence, more rigorous grading, or whether the small number of participating instructors graded in some way that is not representative.

That said, 72% of the students for whom we have data did have scores meeting the benchmark. While this high level of student demonstration of legal analysis skills seems to indicate some success in this course, we do recognize that the broad summary-scores granted for this assignment do not allow for a closer examination of where students need further development. That is, while social work competency in the area of social work ethics and professionalism, and academic competency in the areas of use of content knowledge and critical thinking were demonstrated in this assignment, we cannot determine from this data which dimensions of the CSWE competencies and which NMHU traits need further development. We did observe some students struggling with this assignment, roughly 28%, and thus, further attention to the particular dimensions where students struggle is warranted. The planned use of more targeted measures in future years will help identify these and will enable curricular and/or instructional improvements. That said, it does appear as if students are demonstrating a degree of success in their critical thinking and application of law and ethics-related content knowledge.

#### **Student Learning Outcome 4**

##### **Assessment: Action Plan Assignment, SW 341, Social Policy & Social Services**

Using the evidence-informed documentation of a social need, problem, or issue, and the evidence-informed analysis of existing policy from earlier assignments, student summarize an evidence-informed policy recommendation. Next, they write an action plan which identifies possible coalition partners, crafts a persuasive message, and drafts a strategy to disseminate that message to lawmakers and the public.

##### **CSWE Competencies demonstrated in this assignment:**

- CSWE Competency # 3: Advance Human Rights and Social Justice
- CSWE Competency #5: Engage in Policy Practice

##### **NMHU Traits demonstrated in this assignment:**

- Trait # 2: Content Knowledge
- Trait # 4: Effective Communication

**Summary of Data:**

Number of Students Assessed	92 (81% of all students enrolled)
Number of Students Meeting Benchmark	67 (73% of students assessed)
Number of Students Not meeting the Benchmark	25 (27% of students assessed)

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 4:**

Student performance on the Action Plan Presentation was determined to be proficient, or achieving benchmark, if a score of at least 80% was achieved. Of the 92 students for whom scores were provided, 67, or 73%, achieved this benchmark, and 27% did not, including 3 who received 0's and can be presumed to have not completed the assignment. The rate of missing data is high, close to 20%, and Farmington data is not represented, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Note that performance on this assignment was not used as an indicator of student outcomes in previous years, so no trend data is available.

That said, 73% is a somewhat high level of student mastery of social work engagement and intervention skills. While this seems to indicate success in this course, we do acknowledge that the broad summary-scores granted for this assignment do not allow for a closer examination of where students need further development. That is, while social work competency in the areas of advancing human rights and policy practice, and academic competency in the areas of political advocacy content knowledge and written communication were practiced in this assignment, we cannot determine from this data which specific skills need further development. We do know, however, that over one quarter of students struggled, and thus further attention to these social work competencies and NMHU Traits is warranted. The planned use of more targeted measures in future years will help identify areas for curricular and/or instructional improvements.

**Assessment of Center Students:**

The assessment activities described apply to all sections of the above-named courses. The same syllabus, course objectives, assignments and scoring rubrics are used at all sites, including the Centers. However, it should be acknowledged that two of the four indicators had missing data from the Farmington section of the selected courses, limiting the data's representativeness.

**Utilization of Results:**

The data above is flawed, in that it suffers from inconsistent and, in some cases, inadequate data reporting. More importantly, perhaps, it is flawed because summary assignment scores are not targeted either towards the social work competencies or the NMHU Traits. Each summary assignment score is derived from student demonstration of many different integrated skills. Thus, we cannot easily identify areas for curricular or instructional improvement or determine student competency on specific social work or academic behaviors.

In response to these identified weaknesses, a new data collection plan has been put in place for the 2018-2019 school year. The school's CSWE Work Group, together with the Lead Faculty for each core course, has identified assignments that tap into each of the nine social work competencies identified by CSWE. Standardized instructions were provided to all instructors and students at all centers for these identified assignments. Separate from the summary grades, new targeted measures, short surveys called Competency Rating Scales, were developed and will be administered to rate students completing specific assignments on particular behaviors associated with the CSWE competencies. Also, additional survey items were added to select Competency Rating Scales to assess student mastery of each of the NMHU Traits. These measures will help identify on which dimensions of which competencies and on which NMHU Traits our students struggle and succeed. These results will be shared with faculty, particularly the Lead Faculty and the Curriculum Committee, to help direct program improvements.

Because the above-described Competency Rating Scales are an integral part of the School's Self-Study, required for CSWE reaffirmation, a concerted effort is underway to assure consistent and complete data is collected. For the courses where assignments were selected as indicators of student learning outcome measurement, the CSWE Work Group and Lead Faculty have engaged in significant education and outreach to instructors to maximize data collection compliance and data quality.

#### **Changes to Program Based on Results:**

In all honesty, the data analysis presented above has not be used to inform curriculum or instructional improvements. Rather, it has informed what we hope will be significant improvements to data collection, described above and in our 2018-9 assessment plan, submitted separately. The BSW program is up for reaccreditation by the national Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in 2020, and we are currently engaged in an extensive self-study, which includes course-based and field-based learning outcome assessments, as well as a full curriculum review. A faculty member has been relieved of some teaching responsibilities in order to coordinate these efforts, and a CSWE Work Group, which includes the Dean, the MSW Program Coordinator, the BSW Program Coordinator (who is also the Curriculum Committee Chair), the Field Director, the CSWE Coordinator just specified, and an additional faculty member, meets biweekly to fine-tune the assessment plans and guide our program review. Our goal is not only to use the new student learning data to document program impacts as required for reaccreditation, but also to identify the social work professional and academic skills with which our students struggle, and to determine how we can improve our teaching to better prepare our students for graduation and their social work careers.

#### **Retention Strategies:**

The Facundo Valdez School of Social Work actually has good retention and graduation rates, we presume, in part, because we have a well-defined course sequence or program map, providing students a clear pathway to degree completion, and in part because we only teach upper-classmen, who have already achieved some academic success. That said, we can and do make steps to improve. Our primary efforts to improve retention have focused on improving our advisement structure. We now have a

system in place to assure all students are assigned an advisor, and that both the student and faculty member are informed of how to contact one another. These advisors are all full-time (contingent and tenured or tenure-track) faculty members, and all advisors are assigned both BSW and MSW advisees. Faculty advisors receive training and support on the course sequence and curriculum and on effective advisement strategies, including methods of outreach and use of Degree Audit. Further, our school holds regular faculty meetings to disseminate updates in both curriculum and advisement, and at these meetings, we also confer as a team to identify students academically at-risk, to problem-solve regarding these students, and to weigh options for intervention. In the future, the School of Social Work hopes to develop both a social work faculty handbook (on standards for teaching, advising and student support) and a social work student handbook (on available supports and guidance and on school policies and expectations).