UCC Program Review Committee
Summary of Review

Program: Social Work

Date of last review: AY 2013-2014
Date of this review: AY 2022-2023

The program offers the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- Master of Social Work (in-person and e-campus)
- Bachelor of Arts in Social Work
- Bachelor of Social Work
- Associate in Human Service Technology
- Social Service Minor

Recommendation: This program is found to be <u>viable</u>.

See report for commendations, concerns, and recommendations.

The report was forwarded to the program director and college dean. Their responses are attached.

The Graduate Council's comments are included as well.

Ohio University - Social Work Department
Program Review Report
2023

Review Team

1. Louis Guardiola, Associate Lecturer Social Work, University of Toledo, Toledo Ohio (external)
2. Greg-Victor C. Obi, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Management Science, College of Business, Ohio University (Internal)
3. Kimberlee Orden, MS, RD, LD, FAND, Associate Clinical Professor, Dietetic Internship Director, Ohio University - Dublin Campus (Internal)

Summary

On March 24 & 27, the review team met with the Department of Social Work faculty and students. The department offers the following degree programs:

- ➢ Associate in Human Service Technology
- ➢ Bachelor of Social Work
- ➢ Bachelor of Arts in Social Work
- ➢ Master of Social Work (In-person and e-campus)

The department has one chair that oversees all degree programs with program directors for each program. Additionally, field directors administer the field components for undergraduate and graduate MSW programs.

In July 2019, the Social Work Program moved from the Department of Social and Public Health to become its own department in the College of Health Sciences and Professions (CHSP). The new department became the Department of Social Work (DSW) and oversees all graduate and undergraduate social work degree programs and the Human Services Technology (HST) associate degree. The social work programs are offered at all campuses.

Like the Social Work program, the HST program has a longstanding history of serving Ohio University students. The Human Services Technology program is offered on the Chillicothe, Lancaster, and Southern campuses. The HST program is a two-year program leading to an associate in applied science degree in Human Services Technology (HST). These three HST programs provide regional campus students with a generalist education and professional ethical skills and awareness. The program originated on the Chillicothe campus during the 1975-76 academic year. The HST program expanded to the Southern campus in 1980 and was made available to the Lancaster campus community in the Fall semester of the 2009-2010

academic year. The most recent review of the HST program was conducted during the 2015-16 academic year. In 2020, the Human Services Technology Program (HST) was realigned as part of OneOHIO from Regional Higher Education (RHE) to the College of Health Sciences and Professions (CHSP) in the Department of Social Work (DSW), which is now responsible for its oversight. The social work program has had an inclusive model with regional campuses all reporting to one department and one chair.

Commendations
- ❖ Notwithstanding the heavy workloads, the faculty morale and camaraderie are good. Collegial relationships foster support within the team which helps the team meet its obligations. However, there is an obvious lack of resources and inconsistency in policies, procedures, and guidance.
- ❖ The program has recently hired talented faculty in key leadership positions to assist the Chair.
- ❖ All faculty and staff are working hard despite the lack of administrative support. The faculty remains committed to research, scholarship, and identification of funding to continue to support the high quality of education provided by the program.
- ❖ <u>Despite limited resources and nationwide enrollment challenges, Social Work has expanded its offerings and increased enrollments.</u>
- ❖ Social work professionals are in demand as there is a workforce shortage across the state. This program, therefore, fulfills critical workforce training for future social workers who in turn, after graduation, fill the job gap in Ohio, with a focus on Southeastern Ohio.

Areas of Improvement:
- ❖ The social work programs continue to grow in enrollment. This growth has strained both fiscal and staffing resources.
  - o The four units are supported by one administrative assistant. The faculty have voiced concern that while the administrative assistant does excellent work and is identified as the backbone of the department, she is overworked and hence, unable, as should be expected being a single individual, to sometimes meet some of the needs of the department promptly. This has put a strain on work products, hiring paperwork, and communication amongst campuses.
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- ❖ The onboarding of new faculty appears to be inconsistent based on the discussion with new faculty. This includes both full-time and adjunct faculty.
- ❖ Across all social work programs, mentoring of faculty for promotion is lacking.
  - o Mentoring of pre-tenured faculty is uneven. Some pre-tenured faculty report adequate mentoring, while others report receiving little guidance and advice, and when they seek out advice from colleagues, it is not helpful due to different

interpretations. The level of expectations of annual review and dossier format is not clear with mixed instructions that pre-tenure staff seek out on their own.

- o Mentoring of instructional faculty regarding promotion does not occur, with many having questions and lacking knowledge of policies and processes that are key for successful promotion.
- ❖ It was noted that annual reviews are either late or are not completed.
- ❖ It was noted that significant confusion exists amongst faculty as it related to contracts, workload policies, and actual workloads vs. their contracted workloads. Direction and guidance related to this are inconsistent across all campuses.
- ❖ It is very critical that additional faculty are hired for the HST program. Giving the program viability. The program serves as a feeder to the BSW program, and many of its graduates have ready employment in the growing need for its niche in Ohio.

Recommendations
- ❖ Administration will need to evaluate whether the current administrative support (1FTE) is adequate. Adding additional staff and/or identifying opportunities for shared services and succession planning.
- ❖ The department was cited by CSWE for non-compliance with faculty-to-student ratios. The critical imperative here is that Ohio University must prioritize the hiring of full-time faculty rather than the current huge reliance on adjuncts for the program, or it risks losing accreditation for this profitable program.

- ❖ A review will need to be conducted on how to improve the mentoring, onboarding, and support of new faculty. This is especially important to help retain faculty and maintain accreditation compliance.
- ❖ Continued efforts to recruit diverse faculty and staff by the department will need human resources and administration support. Currently, there is only one African-American FTE faculty member on staff and no FTE Latinx faculty. The self-study indicated that attracting ethnically diverse staff to a predominately white community is a challenge.
- ❖ Development of a corrective action plan to bring the department into compliance with policies about workload and performance reviews. This was also cited as an area of improvement in the self-study.
- ❖ Consider moving the social work faculty to the same building as the rest of the College of Health Sciences and Professions programs. In the interim, the review committee recommends that a partition should be created at the current location to make the department's conference room accessible to faculty without the need to pass through the department chair's office.

<u>Overall Judgement:</u>

The social work programs are considered viable and very valuable for Ohio University to maintain and support. Social work professionals are much in demand as there is a workforce shortage across the state. The successful reaffirmation of accreditation affirms that the program is of quality and produces competent, ethical, and professional social workers ready to work in their communities. This success can be attributed to having a highly qualified and dedicated team of social work faculty and staff.

1. The program as a whole

The program director reported that while the program has seen tremendous growth, the need for FTE faculty did not increase to meet the demands of the increase in enrollment. The department had to rely on the use of adjunct faculty in the undergraduate and graduate areas. Although there is sufficient coverage for the core curriculum courses, there is not enough faculty to cover elective courses. Adding more full-time faculty to meet the current enrollment will also allow more flexibility to add electives. The need for more electives was also voiced by the student focus group.

The faculty members also identified that while the program has grown in enrollment, lack of staffing has negatively impacted the class size as staffing has not kept up with this growth. Faculty voiced the need to add more full-time faculty. While adding adjuncts is not the ideal solution, it serves as a band-aid to keep the staff from burnout. Interestingly, students also highlighted the understaffed program in the student meeting.

The growth in the social work program has impacted the support staff. There is one full-time administrative assistant who supports all components of the program. The administrative assistant identified that more faculty are needed to meet the educational and administrative needs of the program, because of the increase in enrollment and the addition of the online platform.

The probationary tenure-track faculty expressed concern about the lack of communication within the department. They indicated a lack of feedback with the yearly performance reviews, which the faculty interpret as being set up for failure. The lack of mentorship or guidance was also identified as a barrier to the tenure process completion. Faculty felt that these dynamics raised concerns of a lack of belonging and inclusivity and an overall lack of commitment to diversity.

The field faculty shared that they had a great partnership with the community. The field faculty are actively involved in community events and encourage social work students to participate in activities like advocacy day. The field faculty also noted that yearly performance evaluations

and contracts were not being completed promptly. The faculty felt that many of the challenges stem from the lack of financial and administrative resources. They shared that while there was cohesiveness and collaboration as a team, the stress from lack of resources if not addressed will negatively impact the team. They shared that the onboarding process of new staff was not adequate, they felt they just muddled through the best they could. Faculty also shared their frustration with receiving little or mixed guidance on their roles and responsibilities. The faculty shared that despite these frustrations, they can meet the educational needs of the students and be supportive of each other. The field faculty have recommended that they be seen as clinical faculty so that their titles are more aligned with the role they carry out as field experts. This has been taken into consideration by the administration.

The regional faculty shared that because of the smaller cohorts, faculty have engaged with students in more of a mentorship role than just academics. The smaller cohorts appear more appealing to non-traditional students. There has been an increase in enrollment with the expansion into the regional campuses. The challenges expressed by the regional faculty were related to the lack of administrative oversight, administrative support, and the need for more faculty. These challenges impede the program from expanding, i.e., more electives, and often lead to workload issues that lead to low morale. The faculty also expressed the need to expand the in-person MSW program to all campuses.

As there is currently a shortage of qualified BSW and MSW to meet the workforce demands of Southern Ohio and across the state. Social work graduates should have no problem finding employment upon graduation. It was noted that 80% of Ohio University social work graduates remain in the area and have little to no difficulty in being gainfully employed.

Faculty voiced that the OneOHIO model has been a challenge. The faculty indicated that the job roles are not clearly defined, pressure is high, unequal stipends, and challenges in leadership. The faculty did voice that they had functioned as a streamlined program with all campuses reporting to one department and see the value in the OneOHIO model. However, the mechanics (policies and procedures) of the program need improvement and clarity.

2. Associate Degree in Human Services Technology Program

The HST program has experienced significant changes. Since the last review, there were four full-time faculty, including one Tenure Track, three non-Tenure Track faculty, and sixteen additional adjunct instructors. Two full-time faculty were on the Chillicothe campus, one was on the Lancaster, and one on the Southern campus. Currently, there is only one full-time faculty (Instructional level) located on the Chillicothe campus, responsible for administrative oversight, advising, recruitment, retention, and teaching. The self-study reported that the HST program has gone from 12 faculty members to one FTE faculty member and an adjunct.

The HST program director indicated that the HST program is a good match with the BSW program as it is a seamless two-plus-two-degree track. The challenge is that the HST program is an online program and the BSW is currently in-person, so it is not as attractive to those students who prefer the online format. The program director indicated more faculty are needed to help expand the program. Ideally, a faculty on each campus. This expansion will help ease the demand for associate-level graduates. Also, there is a need to diversify the program to include an in-person component. The program director has explored options for expansion but has been informed there is no funding.

3. Undergraduate Programs

The undergraduate faculty and program director report that the program continues to be viable as evidenced by its continued growth. The challenges are like other programs as they relate to the need for more faculty to continue expanding and creating an online platform. The undergraduate social work program director reported that the demand for bachelor-level licensed social work professionals is in high demand in the Athens community and surrounding areas. The need for more faculty to better staff courses and to offer more electives was voiced by the program.

The social work faculty are effectively engaged in service to the surrounding community. The field staff has excellent collaborations with local social service and behavioral health agencies that serve as a pipeline for internship opportunities for undergraduate social work students. Adjunct faculty also work in the field which is an asset in having them teach in the program.

The undergraduate program successfully met the accreditation standards and has been accredited through 2029. The program continues to effectively measure and monitor outcome measures and adjusts as needed.

4. Graduate program – E-Campus MSW program

The MSW e-campus program director is a recent addition to the department. The director reported that the rollout of the online MSW program was very overwhelming. The enrollment more than doubled in a short time. The composition of the online cohort of students changed from more traditional to non-traditional working students.

Pearson, the contractor for the online program, in addition to recruitment of potential students also provides support for advising, this does alleviate some of the administrative functions placed on the director. The online curriculum is congruent with the in-person MSW curriculum. The online faculty also expressed frustration with the lack of consistency with the workload process and that the field seminar was measured differently and not consistent on workloads. The review committee suggests that field faculty should be categorized as clinical faculty as that

would help clear the confusion associated with their workload. The director also added if the goal is to continue to increase enrollment or move to a full-time online program, there will be a need to add faculty.

The online MSW program successfully met accreditation standards and has received accreditation through 2029. The program continues to effectively collect and monitor outcome measures and makes adjustments as needed to improve the curriculum.

The graduate student spoke highly of the program. They felt the online platforms are easy to navigate. There were some concerns with field instruction, but it got resolved. The students felt the MSW program was a good fit for non-traditional students.

5. Graduate program - MSW in-person program

The graduate program continues to have a strong enrollment given the geographic and cultural context of Ohio University. Like his peers in the other programs, the MSW director identified the need for more faculty. He indicated that relying on adjunct faculty to fill the courses was a challenge. Faculty members felt that because the program disproportionally uses adjuncts, it opens up a lack of compliance with accreditation standards. The Athens campus has more tenured faculty than the regional branches. The need to provide more courses on diagnosis and assessment was voiced by the faculty.

Another important concern, that the review committee feels that the MSW program needs to address is to move the new students' orientation of the BSW – MSW fast-track students to the early part of summer before the students take their first course in the program.

TO: Members of the UCC Program Review Committee
FROM: Terry Cluse-Tolar, Chair, Department of Social Work
DATE: May 4, 2023
RE: Response to the Program Review

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Program Review Report. First, we want to thank the reviewers who were professional and knowledgeable about the process.

Our department is off the usual cycle for program reviews. Please accept my apologies. I did not fully understand the process related to our eternal accreditation. We were finishing up our external reaffirmation of accreditation through the Council on Social Work Education at the same time, a process I mistakenly thought "counted" for the internal review.

A site visit is a snapshot of programs on a particular day and time. The history that the report misses is that, as chair, I was also serving as the MSW Program Director for both the Athens Campus and eCampus programs. Our online program enrolled its first group of nine students in the spring 2019. The following table shows the fast growth of the program.

Plan Code	Spring 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2021	Spring 2022	Spring 2023
MS6606	9	60	74	63	58
MS6607	0	53	117	143	150
TOTAL	9	113	191	206	208

We were constantly hiring adjunct, instructional, and tenure-track faculty during this time. Just getting approval to hire was an arduous process, let alone the time it took to complete the hire. Our full-time faculty were especially stretched thin as well – working with the instructional designer to build classes and getting the adjunct faculty up to speed to teach them once hired. I read all the application materials for those applying to the online program due to a three-day Pearson-preferred turnaround time.

And, of course, during this time, Covid hit, requiring significant time attending to faculty and student needs. As a university, we moved to OneOhio. While the BSW and MSW programs already functioned as one across campuses, my workload increased from doing annual reviews for eight faculty to annual reviews for, now, 22 faculty. The Human Services Technology Program joined the Social Work Department during this time.

The report discusses the program leadership in place. Warren Galbreath has served as the BSW Program Director for a long time and showed me the ropes when I arrived. He is located on the Eastern Campus. As a result, I coordinated the incoming undergraduate recruiting events for Athens. Fortunately, Jenny Shadik took over the undergraduate coordination duties for the Athens campus in Spring 2022. Mingun Lee became the MSW Program Director for the Athens Campus in Fall 2022. And Ken Larimore became the MSW eCampus Program Director in January 2023. Mary Jane Preece serves as the Program Director for the HST Program and is located on the Chillicothe Campus.

The report is absolutely correct regarding late faculty annual reviews, mentoring, and onboarding. Before the start of the online program, these tasks were consistently on time. I own that to the degree that my workload since the start of the online MSW has been relentless, permitting me one week of

vacation in each of the last two summers. I am in a three-year hole, working now to get out. But that does not happen overnight.

Critical findings of the review include the desperate need for additional support staff. Our administrative specialist's workload has increased from supporting the BSW Program on the Athens Campus to all the regional campuses, then to the Athens Campus MSW Program, to the eCampus MSW Program, and finally to the Human Services Technology Program. In addition, she supports a faculty that has grown to 22 across four programs and six campuses. She is the point person for most student calls and applicants with questions. She does an amazing job, but she is human.

Another critical finding is the need for additional faculty in the Human Services Technology Program. Mary Jane Preece is solely responsible for the program director's duties, advising and teaching all the classes. The program is available on the Chillicothe, Lancaster, and Southern Campuses. Mary Jane is physically located on the Chillicothe Campus. There is a huge need for human services/behavioral health workers nationwide, especially in SE Ohio. Mary Jane has been involved in planning pathways to increase the workforce that includes HST. We won't be able to be part of this vital work without additional HST faculty.

Additionally –
- There are differences across campuses concerning workloads and compensation. I don't see a way to standardize this, considering that campus budgets did not merge when we moved to OneOhio.
- Our eCampus MSW Program depends disproportionately on adjuncts. However, our Athens campus program does not, as was noted in the report. Many Athens Campus MSW faculty have asked to teach online and face-to-face. When this happens, hiring an adjunct faculty member to fill in face-to-face is usually needed. But most of the faculty teaching face-to-face are full-time faculty.
- Course releases were provided to those moving into leadership positions. This will ultimately increase the need for adjunct faculty.

Overall, we have solid programs and faculty. Resources are needed to keep up the programs, especially if expansion is being considered.

Thank you again for the time spent reviewing our programs and providing an opportunity to respond.

5.11.23

Bärbel Such, Ph.D.
Chair, UCC Program Review Committee
Associate Professor of German, Dept. of Modern Languages Ohio University

Dear Dr. Such

Thank you and the internal and external reviewers for their time and care in reviewing programs within the Department of Social Work covering the period AY2014-15 to AY 2021-22. I concur with the finding that the program is viable. I also wanted to respond to the report offered by the review committee and the response from the Department Chair, Dr. Terry Cluse-Tolar.

The Department of Social Work fills a critical role in the college related to the workforce in caring for people, families, and communities. Behavioral and mental health is an area getting a great deal of attention in the state, region and country. Serving the community is a vital college value and the engagement of social workers not only in the work they do but also in their commitment to serving communities through their research and service. It is critical that everyone in the College of Health Sciences and Professions understand that people exist within different systems and understanding relationships in families and communities is critical to linking people with care and support in communities.

As the director noted, there were a constellation of factors increasing workload and the stress of transitions on the Social Work Department. A rapid rise in enrollment in their online MSW program along with continued needs to attend to their face to face offerings in both traditional and advanced standing tracks created a need for scaling offering, but also to coordinate resources. It is critical to have organizational structures that allow for scale and distribution of workload. I'm not certain the department had all the right infrastructure to support their growth. Some of this can be evident in the chair's reported difficultly with timely completion of evaluation and on-boarding tasks. I think that discussions around administrative support should also be considered in the context of overall infrastructure. It is important to understand procedures and processes at scale and at the level of online vs. face to face delivery. Adding personnel (unless it is a process consultant) is most helpful when the structure is optimized for where the organization is now and the new personnel facilitate either growth or gaps for which there is no other solution. In the past several months DSW has been working to improve its

infrastructure. There is still some work to do in the upcoming year. I believe it will also address the chair's workload concerns. I will state that having someone feel they cannot take a vacation is not the outcome I want for any unit. Overloading a single administrator is also highly undesirable. I do believe there are people who can help manage the administrative workload in the unit.

The HST program does have potential and I agree with that. I also think there are currently explorations of articulation agreements with community colleges related to the HST program as well as a clear plan of regional campus offerings and strategy that are important to know before making hiring decisions there.

Faculty compensation is an important consideration. In addition to a peer comparison at the university level, I have discipline specific data that will help to structure remediation decisions in closing salary gaps once the final decisions are made by the university around investments in salary.

Thank you again for the careful review

John M. McCarthy

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The Graduate Council Program Review committee reviewed of a UCC review of the Social Work area.

The Social Work programs are deemed viable from the report provided.
- Based on the trend numbers provided, we see potential for more growth in the MSW program.
- The challenges the department has had performing some basic duties need to be overcome for continued viability.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about this review.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gabe Giordano
Chair,
Program Review Committee - University Graduate Council