Appendix A4.4.12

Social Work
**A. What studies has your university done in the last three years to ensure your graduates are meeting the needs of employers?**

The Department of Social Work is a professional program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. As a professional program, we have always been active in our efforts to ensure that we are responsive to “market” demands and high standards of professional practice in preparing BSWs and MSWs for employment in the Big Bend area, throughout Florida, and the United States. Within this context, our undergraduate program provides an advanced generalist focus, teaching and training professional social workers for assuming entry-level positions in public, private not-for-profit, and other private settings providing social service and human service support-based services to individuals, groups, communities in diverse settings. Our MSW program grew out of an assessed need within the community to educate and train advanced specialists in social service administration and community-based practice. In keeping with accreditation standards and a commitment to ensure our students are the best trained and equipped to assume employment within their field of specialization (and meet employer needs), the Department engages into the following activities: collaboration with an independent Community Advisory Council for the Department of Social Work; continued consultation and formal feedback/surveys from field agency supervisors and coordinators for our BSW and MSW students every semester, and continued outreach to the professional community and potential employers for our students/graduates. A formal alumni survey has been recently developed for our BSW and MSW graduates but has yet to be utilized. The Community Advisory Council for the Department has a number of influential individuals and targeted stakeholders that have a timely and developed understanding of market and employment needs for professional social workers. These individuals hold a number of titles including (but not limited to): the Executive Director of the Florida Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, a Mental Health Associate and Senior Court Analysts for the Office of the State’s Court Administrator; the Assistant Director of Minority Health for the Florida Department of Health; the Vice President of the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida; a Human Services Analyst for the City of Tallahassee, the Executive Director of Greater Frenchtown Governor’s Front Porch Revitalizations Council; a Government Operations Consultant for the State of Florida; and the Executive Director of Second Harvest of the Big Bend. The Council on Social Work Education has a series of Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards related to accredited programs’ competencies associated with preparing students for professional practice. There are 10 core competencies (measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills) and a number of key educational policies (to be manifested in the curriculum and field education components) designed to prepare social work graduates for professional practice. These can be viewed and downloaded from: http://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/2008EPASDescription.aspx
Do you have measurable goals to meet employers' current needs? If so, please provide them. How often are these goals updated?

The following are a series of program objectives (that are linked to specific program goals) from accreditation standards, BSW and MSW program self-evaluations, and annual program assessment and evaluation plans for the BSW and MSW programs. These program goals and objectives are revised/reviewed by each program every year (seeking the Community Advisory Council’s input) and as part of a more encompassing self-study that is part of reaccreditation activities with the Council on Social Work Education every seven years. This list includes select measurable objectives specific to the question posed. For more details regarding the specific tools of measurement for each objective and a more encompassing list of program goals and objectives approved by the CSWE, please see the BSW and MSW Student Handbooks, the BSW and MSW Accreditation Self-Evaluation Reports, and the BSW and MSW annual FAMOUS Assessment Reports. BSW Program

- Students will demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use critical thinking in analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating social policies, services, and programs
- Students will apply ethics and values both as students and professionals
- Students will acquire the skills to utilize technology, including the internet, for education, advocacy, research, and practice purposes
- Students will have a knowledge base that helps them meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities
- Students will be familiar with the characteristics of populations at-risk
- Students will be able to articulate knowledge of and demonstrate sensitivity to the characteristics and social barriers experienced by the disenfranchised (those who feel they have little or no influence in society), the oppressed, and other diverse group members
- Students will understand the impact of various forces on political/legislative support for social issues
- Students will have the capacity for using the generalist practice knowledge and skills to advocate on behalf of the African American community
- Students will understand the impact of political, social and economic forces that affect the African American community
- Students will have the capacity for using the generalist practice knowledge and skills to advocate on behalf of the African American community

The MSW Program provides a specialized focus on social service administration and community-based practice (that builds upon the foundation of values, knowledge, and skills that is the focus of the BSW program). Within this context, select measurable objectives include:

- Student will display appropriate attitudes and behaviors consistent with professional social worker practice
- Student will learn to think critically about the human condition and how to solve social problems, applying the problem-solving method
- Students will demonstrate proficiency in applying ethical standards to practice, as well as the ability to contextualize human challenges by applying critical thinking skills to solve issues affecting systems
- Students will accurately apply appropriate theoretical frameworks of human development and systems theories with a focus on the strengths of social systems
- Students will demonstrate an appreciation for diversity and will articulate and apply culturally sensitive principles of economic, social and political justice to complex situations through theory, practice, policy and research
- Students will competently employ research, interventions, and communication skills to enhance, evaluate, and refine their practice and to contribute to the profession’s body of knowledge
- Students will be able to articulate knowledge of and demonstrate sensitivity to the characteristics and social barriers experienced by the disenfranchised (those who feel they have little or no influence in society), the oppressed, and other diverse group members
- Students will have a knowledge base that helps them meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities
- Students will acquire the skills to utilize technology, including the internet, for education, advocacy, research, and practice purposes
- Students will apply ethics and values both as students and professionals
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use critical thinking in analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating social policies, services, and programs
- Students will understand the impact of political, social and economic forces that affect the African American community
- Students will have the capacity for using the generalist practice knowledge and skills to advocate on behalf of the African American community

Do you have measurable goals for each graduate in the areas of writing proficiency and critical thinking? If so, please send them to me with the goals and include the results for the last five to ten years.

Please see the response to the above question for itemization of specific program objectives related to writing proficiency and critical thinking. These objectives extend from educational policy 2.1.3 of the CSWE Accreditation Standards. This standard is as follows: Educational Policy 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers

- distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom
- analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation; and
- demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues

Measurement of the acquisition of these skills are evaluated using a plethora of reports on the performance of BSW and MSW students on select assignments and graded exercises meant to test the integration of these skills with respect to a particular topic or field of study (including work within the field, rated by field supervisors/potential employers). Over the past three years a minimum of 80% to a maximum of 100% of BSW and MSW students have demonstrated competence on any one of the number of proficiency measures for integrative writing and critical thinking (see annual program FAMOUS assessment reports).
E. Are professors required to integrate writing proficiency and critical thinking into all courses? If so, what oversight is provided to ensure that these skills are being taught? How are these skills integrated into course assessments?

All faculty members are required to infuse the standards denoted in response to item C above into their teaching of course content. These standards and their association with assessment of student performance are to be detailed in all course syllabi. The syllabi are to be reviewed by the BSW and MSW Program Directors each semester and BSW and MSW Curriculum Committees on an annual basis (as part of the a broader curriculum review). An evaluation of student performance on select assignments across all courses in conjunction with structured and detailed written feedback from field supervisors (independent professionals within the professional community supervising BSW and MSW students in practicum/internships) provide an involved assessment of student skills in these areas. Should there be inconsistencies in the level and quality of assessed skills and performance of students between faculty and field supervisors, these issues are addressed (and corrective actions/explorations potentially taken) between the general faculty and field faculty as such relates to modifications of the curriculum, revisions of plans of study for select students, modifications to the field seminar, and/or the development of supplemental seminars and professional development opportunities. All standard and model syllabi used by faculty are reviewed and approved by the Council on Social Work Education (the accreditation body for the Department of Social Work). Examples of sample syllabi are attached.

F. Do you have measurable goals for student success after graduation? If so, please send me the goals and the results for the last five to ten years.

Although the BSW and MSW programs are actively engaged in developing students' professional values, knowledge, and skills; place and train students in professional settings; have developed formal relationships with potential employers of graduates; and disseminate information regarding job and career opportunities, there are no currently specified program goals related to employment characteristics of alumni. However, alumni surveys have been developed within the past 2 years with the hopes of surveying alumni on these items once an updated alumni database has been validated. The Department of Social Work maintains a specialized program (Title IV-E Child Welfare Education Program) that provides specialized education and training objectives (and funding support) for select BSW and MSW students preparing for practice/employment in the Foster Care and Adoption arena in Florida in state agencies as well as private agencies such as the Children's Home Society and other CBC's. During the last five years of our program, 39 of 40 students (97.5%) passed the State of Florida Child Welfare Certification Program (the highest passing rate of any Social Work Program in Florida). As denoted in response to Question A, the Department of Social Work prepares its graduates for professional practice (once they graduate) in accordance with accreditation standards. The Council on Social Work Education has a series of Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards related to accredited programs' competencies associated with preparing students for professional practice. There are 10 core competencies (measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills) and a number of key educational policies (to be manifested in the curriculum and field education components) designed to prepare social work graduates for professional practice. These can be viewed and downloaded from: http://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/2008EPASDescription.aspx. These standards demand the demonstration of competencies in practice via their field practicum while a student (400-500 hours for BSW students and 900 hours for MSW students), prior to entering employment. Although contact with alumni is encouraged (as part of a program's ongoing assessment) in select communications, there is no specific accreditation standard that mandates contact with alumni or other sources to gauge the extent to which competencies are manifested once they have left the program. Regardless, a number of our alumni maintain contact with our program and a number of recent graduates of our MSW program have entered Ph.D. Programs. These include (but are not limited to): Demetra Stackhouse, Ph.D. student, Social Work, Clark Atlanta University; Danielle Sweat, Ph.D. student, Social Work, Clark Atlanta University; Gregory Bacourt, Ph.D. student, Social Work, Howard University; Edward Clark, DrPH student, Institute of Public Health, Florida A&M University; Ebony McGriff, Ph.D. in social work (awarded December, 2010, Clark Atlanta University); and, Tamara Groeneveldt, Ph.D. Student in Nutrition Science, Howard University.
**M.** What programs do you have to educate students regarding job opportunities? What are your measurable goals for each program? Do you use information similar to the data available from the Florida education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) to prepare students prior to admission and prior to selection of major? Please provide me the results for the last five to ten years.

There are a variety of mechanisms and activities the Department is engaged in as a means of educating/informing students of job opportunities. These include the following:

The Department has established two separate BSW and MSW Student Resource sites using Blackboard technology with a specific link to postings or information received from community agencies (and faculty members and staff) and any relevant professional regional, state and national list serves associated with professional association and professional development initiatives; for example, the National Association of Social Workers, the Title IV-E (child welfare) list serve, etc.

By virtue of being a professional degree program, the BSW and MSW degree programs have formal contractual relationships with a multitude of local, regional, and state agencies to provide practicum training and supervision for our students. There are 78 and 41 agencies (and potential employers) that that serve as field agencies for the BSW and MSW program (respectively). These agencies include municipal, county and state public agencies; and, local and regional private not-for-profit agencies providing a variety of services across a variety of fields of practice that are representative of employment settings for our graduates. These agencies are potential employers that will (via the field department) make known employment opportunities for our graduates. Information regarding these opportunities is distributed to students via the BSW and MSW Student Resource sites.

In addition to the above, faculty and the BSW and MSW Program Directors are activity engaged with the professional community as a means of promoting the program, increasing the visibility of our students, and recruiting opportunities for our graduates. For example, the Department has developed a listing of all social and human service agencies within the Big Bend area (especially those affiliated or receiving funds from the United Way and local and State agencies) and state agencies across the fields of practice for which our students are training for and interested in seeking employment from. These agencies are contacted at least once a year with information regarding our program with the invitation to collaborate in developing formal networking relationships. Finally, the Department (as part of a broader strategic plan) has considered and will be discussing with our Community Advisory Council, the idea of setting up/establishing a formal mentoring program that links our graduating students (especially our MSW students) with established professionals and alumni that have excelled within their respective fields. It is hoped such a mentoring program will aid in the professional development of our graduates while enhancing employability skills.

**Q.** Please provide me with any additional information you think may be helpful, including your thought process to make sure we are headed in the right direction.

In addition to program goals and objectives already highlighted in responses to other questions (that benefit all students and all populations they work with upon graduation), the BSW and MSE Programs have some unique goals as such relates to marginalized populations and African American Communities. These include for the BSW program: 1. To provide evaluative study of social movements and organizational programs promoting the general welfare of oppressed peoples; and 2) To promote successful strategies for political, social, and economic development of African Americans and their communities. For the MSW program, there is a commitment to working with populations at risk; namely: To provide students with the knowledge, values and skills necessary for critical analysis of social work theory, policy, practice, and research, particularly in their application to members of populations-at-risk, as distinguished by age, class, color, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. These goals extend from the historical mission of the profession of social work, Florida A&M University, and the Department of Social Work. These goals are pertinent today as they have been for decades as, for example, is evidenced by the level of racial and ethnic disparities associated with populations of children served by child welfare systems; those impacted by poverty; and, those with limited health insurance and limited exposure to community-based services/resources. Our program is committed to preparing competent, critically-minded professionals interested in working with populations (individuals, families, and communities) experiencing real-world problems and in building a community-based response to social problems.