

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

Institutional Effectiveness

GRADUATE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK (GCSW)

PH.D. PROGRAM – 2012-2013

Year: 2012 – 2013

1. **DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM:** GCSW – PH.D. PROGRAM – (YEAR '12-13)

2. **MISSION STATEMENT LAST SUBMITTED:**

GCSW Mission Statement: The mission of the Graduate College of Social Work is to educate professionals for social work practice, research, and leadership. We advocate for innovative, collaborative, inclusive, and humane policies and solutions that promote social, economic, and political justice. Our College generates new knowledge through critical thinking that links rigorous scientific inquiry, ethical social work practice, and community engagement.

PhD Program Goals: The overall goal of the GCSW Doctoral Program is to prepare social work researchers, scholars, and educators to advance the knowledge base of the profession. The Doctoral Program offers students an opportunity to:

- develop a multidisciplinary understanding of complex issues and problems;
- focus on innovative methodologies in knowledge building;
- conduct translational research from problem-solving to real life solutions; and
- foster individual connections and collaborative mentorship.

3. **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

GOAL 1: Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively integrate the knowledge and skills needed to function as doctoral level professionals

PROCEDURE GOAL 1:

How do you measure this goal? The measurement of this goal is successful completion of the Qualifying Paper, which serves as a comprehensive exam. The format of the Qualifying Paper is similar to a grant proposal, which allows students to demonstrate knowledge of a social issue, research methods, scientific inquiry, critical thinking skills and scholarly writing ability.

What is the standard? In order to be considered competent, each student must achieve a passing evaluation of the Qualifying Paper, which is evaluated by a committee of 3 GCSW faculty members. The program is deemed successful when 100% of our students achieve passing ratings of the Qualifying Paper.

ANALYSIS GOAL 1:

What were the actual results? This process was newly implemented during the 2009-2010 academic year; therefore results are available for the past three academic years. This standard was met as evidenced below.

- 2012-2013 Academic Year N=4 100% received an evaluation of pass
- 2011 – 2012 Academic Year N=9 100% received an evaluation of pass
- 2010 – 2011 Academic Year N=4 100% received an evaluation of pass
- Spring / Summer 2010 N=2 100% received an evaluation of pass

What was the process for analyzing results? Evaluation data were extracted from a review of “status” specific to the Qualifying Paper. Once a student’s Qualifying Paper has been evaluated by the committee, the chair of the committee must notify the PhD Program office of the status of the student’s Qualifying Paper. The status may be one of the following: Pass, Revise-Resubmit or Fail. The results presented are aggregates of Qualifying Paper statuses.

INTERPRETATION GOAL 1:

What do the results mean? Once a PhD student submits a passing Qualifying Paper, he/she has demonstrated the competencies needed to develop/write the dissertation proposal.

What needs to be improved? Consistency of evaluation, given each Qualifying Paper is evaluated by different committees.

What is the plan for improvement? Based on buy in from faculty, develop an assessment rubric that will be adopted by all Qualifying Paper Committee members to evaluate Qualifying Papers.

GOAL 2: Ph.D. students will demonstrate the ability to conduct independent research.

PROCEDURE GOAL 2:

How do you measure this goal? This goal is measured via Ph.D. students’ successful completion of the written dissertation and its oral defense.

What is the standard? A majority vote of “pass” from the dissertation committee, following the oral dissertation defense. Approximately 2-4 weeks prior to the scheduled oral defense, the PhD student submits the written dissertation manuscript to the dissertation committee members for review. During this review period, dissertation committee members may provide suggestions for improvement and request edits/revisions. The program is deemed successful when 100% of our students achieve a passing evaluation of the written dissertation and its oral defense.

ANALYSIS GOAL 2:

What were the actual results? One hundred percent (100%) of the Ph.D. students who have defended their dissertations over the past 4 years have done so successfully by receiving a vote of “pass” from their dissertation committees; therefore this standard was met. Academic year-specific results are provided below:

- 2012-2013 N=3 or 100%
- 2011-2012 N=7 or 100%
- 2010-2011 N=5 or 100%
- 2009-2010 N=6 or 100%

What was the process for analyzing results? These results were derived from an examination of data provided on the required *Form E: Final Dissertation*, which must be completed by the dissertation chair and committee members at the oral defense of the dissertation. Four (4) options are presented on *Form E*: (1) approved in present form; (2) approved with minor revisions; (3) deferred pending approval of major revisions; or (4) reject. Specific to the analysis of Goal #2, data are represented by counts of the two *approved* options (1 and 2) presented immediately above.

INTERPRETATION GOAL 2:

What do the results mean? These results demonstrate our students’ ability to conduct independent research and present their independent research in written and oral formats at the doctoral level.

What needs to be improved? The time frame (months/years) for successful completion of the dissertation after a student has successfully completed the Qualifying Paper.

What is the plan for improvement? It is believed that the 2009 implementation of the Qualifying Paper (which replaced the comprehensive exam) will improve this timeline by

decreasing the average number of months/years between the successful completion of the Qualifying Paper and the Dissertation.

GOAL 3: Ph.D. students will contribute to the scientific knowledge base for social work-related research and practice.

PROCEDURE GOAL 3:

How do you measure this goal? Ph.D. students' scholarship via publication in refereed journals or research presentations at national or state conferences.

What is the standard? Our goal is that 85% of our students will publish refereed and/or present their scholarship at a national or state conference before graduation.

ANALYSIS GOAL 3:

What were the actual results? Over the past three years, the results are as follows:

- 2012-2013: 8 of 28 (28.6%) students, refereed publications and presentations
- 2011-2012: 9 of 34 (26.4%) students, refereed publications and presentations
- 2009-2010: 10 of 34 (30%) students, refereed publications and presentations

The goal of 85% has not been met; however, the rate did increase from the previous academic year. The expectation may be unrealistic; therefore, it warrants examination by the Ph.D. Program Committee during the upcoming academic year.

What was the process for analyzing results? Student progress is monitored by the Ph.D. Program Academic Advisor. Ph.D. students are required to submit information to the advisor, which includes their publications and conference presentations. Data for this goal are extracted derived from student files maintained by the academic advisor.

INTERPRETATION GOAL 3:

What do the results mean? Our Ph.D. students have the necessary skills and competencies to contribute to the social work / social work-related knowledge base, which also improve their post-graduation marketability.

What needs to be improved? Mechanisms to ensure that each Ph.D. student submits manuscripts to refereed journals for publication; and abstracts for presentation at research/professional conferences at the national and state levels.

What is the plan for improvement? Encourage Ph.D. students to select the Alternative Dissertation Format (made available as an option in 2009) versus the traditional 5-Chapter Dissertation format. The Alternative Dissertation Format requires students to write three manuscripts and submit them for publication to refereed journals approved by their dissertation committee. The manuscripts must all be related with a specific focus on a substantive area/problem, to include review of literature, research methods and analyses. Also faculty will be encouraged to provide students with co-authorship and co-presenter opportunities. Include grant/fellowship applications and awards as well as refereed journal submissions, as measures for analyzing this goal.

IV. What are significant accomplishments of this department during AY 2012-2013?

1. Eight (8) Ph.D. students published articles in refereed journals; and 9 made state, national and/or international presentations at research/professional conferences.
2. Five (5) Ph.D. students were admitted to and began the Ph.D. Program in August 2012.
3. The online aspects of admissions application process for the Ph.D. Program have been integrated with the college's process in an effort to streamline the application process and align it with the admissions application website for our college's master's program. The university's new Graduate School is now implementing an online application process modeled after the work of our college, the GCSW.
4. Three (3) Ph.D. students were awarded fellowships from a federal institute (n=1) and two private organizations.

V. Explanation of changes to the previous year's plan.

N/A

*Prepared by Sheara Williams, Ph.D. Program Director
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