

## **NEASC SOCIAL WORK TRANSITION PLAN**

### **Background**

In 2000, 74 students were enrolled in the Social Services Degree at Capital Community College. Currently, there are 182 students enrolled in the Social Services Degree Program at Capital Community College. Data generated by Banner shows that there has been a 59% increase in program enrollment. This spring (2004) the Social Services Degree Program will graduate twenty-five students.

Each semester the CCSU/SWP receives approximately ten applicants from the community college system. Six of the ten students are usually from Capital Community College. With the dramatic enrollment within the CCC/SSP it is anticipated that many social services majors will select the CCSU/SWP. The authors of this report are well aware of the community college student demographic profile as compared to students applying directly into the four year institution. The community college environment has been perceived as more accepting of the non-traditional student; older, poor, first generation college participants, and often employed full-time or part-time in order to keep up with personal demands. Thus, the four year institution must reach out to students who often see the two-year degree as the end to their college education. This collaboration seeks to inform social services majors about educational opportunities in social work programs, to strengthen student preparedness to engage in the rigor of a professional social work program and to create a seamless transition as they transfer to Central Connecticut State University.

### **Identified Goals**

The goal of the collaborative endeavor between Capital Community College (CCC) Social Services Program (SSP) and Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) Social Work Program (SWP) is to enhance the readiness and level of preparedness of community college social services majors for transfer to the social work major. In this light, the following four objectives provided direction for this collaboration:

- To review the CCSU/SWP course specific student learning objectives and field experience objectives for Pre-Social Work majors at CCSU and bring objectives of the CCC/SSP into alignment with the requirements of the CCSU/SWP.
- To review CCSU/SWP course assignments and methods of assessment (SW 226 & SW 227) and those used in the CCC/SSP and identify areas where course assignment expectation and methods of assessment match and/or identify new assignments and methods of assessment for the CCC/SSP.
- To develop a written agreement clearly articulating the end of sophomore year learning outcomes along with the acceptable level of proficiency (course grade and grade point average).
- To create a seamless transition between CCC/SSP and CCSU/SWP.

### **Curriculum**

Integral to the transition work plan is SOC 235 Introduction to Social Welfare at Capital Community College. This course has historically been included in the articulation agreement between both institutions and therefore transfers as SW 226 Introduction to Social Welfare Policy I within the CCSU Social Work Program. This is the only course that transfers into the social work curriculum.

In order to begin the discussion around strengthening and preparing community college students for the social work major, an in-depth exploration of course prerequisites and field education was undertaken. Initially, faculty from both programs initiated a discussion regarding the transfer process and concern of student academic preparation. The fall semester (2003) focused on several brainstorming sessions. The collaborative project was rather lengthy and evolved over the course of the spring 2004 semester. This exploration permitted faculty to review the essential elements of each prerequisite course and how they fit into SW 226 and SW 227 (Human Behavior and the Social Environment I). This led to a closer fit between the SOC 235 Introduction to Social Welfare curriculum content, enhanced course objectives, strengthened and integrated parallel course assignments, consistency of course content within primary required textbook along with other required course reading, parallel required field experience/services learning, and uniform learning outcomes at the end of SW 226 and SOC 235. The following list includes changes or revisions have been made to enhance consistency between SOC 235 and SW 226:

- A review of course objectives for SOC 235 Introduction to Social Welfare and SW 226 Introduction to Social Welfare Policy I (See A-1) revealed that SOC 235 (See A-2) had six broad objectives encompassing key thematic competency areas with some parallels to those objectives in SW 226. In SW 226, 13 objectives articulating foundation content and expectation for pre-social work majors is clearly articulated as per the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) expectations (See A-1). In SW 226 each course objectives is matched to course assignments. The CCC/SSP has revised SOC 235 (See A- 3) objectives so that they are parallel with SW 226 within the CCSU/SSP. In addition course objectives in SOC 235 have been matched to course assignments.

- All course assignments will now be incorporated within the SOC 235 course syllabus to be consistent with what is included in the SW 236 syllabus. This will be helpful to CCC students when they organize their Student Portfolio and complete their Personal Narrative for the CCSU /SWP.
- All course assignments will be parallel between programs. From SW 226 the major course assignment, *Field Practice Agency Analysis Paper* will permit social services majors to examine eight essential components of a social work/social services organization, to gain experience in interviewing, to apply the American Psychological Association Publication Manual (APA) format and to complete their first professional social work report.
- The second shared assignment, *Report on Novel* is one that existed in each course with some differences. The purpose of the assignment is to make students cognizant of human oppression, social injustice, race, culture, class, gender identity and awareness coupled with a social work lens. New to SOC 235 is exposure to issues on cultural competence by applying the NASW Standard of Cultural Competency. The CCSU/SWP will include novels suggested by the CCC/SSP Coordinator.
- The third shared assignment, *Internet Assignment* intends to help students learn about valuable resources on the internet that are important to social work practice. It will also help students understand the interrelationship between system levels such as local (town), state, national and/or international organizations. Finally, it helps students explore areas of professional social work practice.

- The fourth shared assignment, *The Urban Experience in Chicago: Hull House and the Settlement Movement* is an important assignment that provides students with the history of social work in the United States. The website documents how social work became a profession and how it had an impact on U.S. social welfare policies.
- The required textbooks used by the program are similar. The CCC/SSP textbook is *Social Work, Social Welfare and American Society* and the CCSU SWP uses *The Social Work Experience: An Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare* (See B). A review of each textbook's table of content reveals the similarity in format and curriculum content areas. The CCC/SSP will also now include the *NASW Code of Ethic* (See D-1), and *NASW Standards for Cultural Competence* (See D-2), and the *American Psychological Association Publication Manual* (See E) as well as other required readings. The additions introduce the writing mastery in social work encompassing APA instructions and guidelines. In particular the reading assignments expose students to a myriad of themes including values, ethics and standards for cultural competency in social work education and profession. Additionally, the CCC library collection of social work journals was enhanced. While the CCC library has an extensive collection of journals that are vital in support of student research in the human services field, it lacked several social work journals pertinent to this project. The CCC library has purchased this semester a number of social work journals. They will be catalogued during the summer 2004 and placed in circulation for fall semester 2004. Having access to social work journals will be academically meaningful to CCC students it will also

help them make an intellectual transition to CCSU. Students will be exposed to social work journals and will also have an awareness of the role and contribution social workers make to practice research. The CCC/SSP will obtain a copy of *An Annotated Bibliography: Building the Undergraduate Social Work Library (CSWE)* to support the future purchase of books and reference material that will enhance the Social Services Program collection and support the preparation of students for the social work profession. This narrative report includes a comparative list of journals in each library (See C).

- *Service Learning Project* will provide students with ten hours (out of 70 hours) of field experience allowing them to bring field placement hours to CCSU from SOC 235. Students will now be able to document services learning through a new form which will be addressed later in this narrative report.
- Sophomore Learning Outcomes have been articulated for SW 226 and SOC 235 (See A-4). CCC/SSP majors can take the second pre-major course SW 227 Human Behavior and the Social Environment I at CCSU/SWP either before or after graduation if they have taken the two prerequisite courses and obtained a C or better. These courses are Sociology of the Family and Human Biology.

### **Field Experience and Service Learning**

Service Learning is a pedagogical model that intentionally integrates academic learning and relevant community service. This model encourages collaborative partnerships between the college and community it serves; and promotes community service that develops students' citizenship skills and values. At Capital Community College service learning serves as an

opportunity of personal and professional growth allowing students to explore social services as a career path.

Services learning projects will permit the CCC/SSP major to acquire 70 hours of field experiences upon application to the CCSU/SWP. These hours are equivalent to the CCSU/SWP pre-majors hours upon their application to the program. Currently the CCC/SSP has ten hours of service learning incorporated into SOC 235. The CCC/SSP has develop six additional service learning projects that will permit CCC students to bring with them multiple field service learning experiences within diverse agency settings. The grid below portrays the number of service learning hours with the respective CCC/SSP courses. Finally, a description of service learning associated with each course is provided.

Courses and Hrs of Services Learning	SOC117 5 hrs.	SOC123 20 hrs.	SOC210 10 hrs.	SOC235 10 hrs.	SOC 201 10 hrs.	POL111/POL112 5 hrs.	PSY105 10 hrs.
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Services Learning Courses & Description

Sociology 117- Minorities in the U.S.

Students enrolled in this course will be expected to conduct 5 hours of services learning in agencies serving but not limited to people of color, gays and lesbians, immigrants, people with disabilities and religious minorities.

Sociology 123- Community Organization

Students enrolled in this course will be expected to conduct a needs assessment in the community. Students will utilize 20 hours of class time to conduct the needs assessment with populations living in the Greater Hartford Area.

Sociology 210- Sociology of the Family

This course will provide students the opportunity to conduct 10 hours of services learning with agencies that provide assistance to women (includes battered shelters) children and families living in the Greater Hartford Area.

Sociology 201-Contemporary Social Issues

Students will provide 10 hours of services learning to agencies or community based an activity that addresses a social issue such as crime, poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, violence and homelessness.

Sociology 235-Introduction to Social Welfare Policy

This course will expect students to conduct 10 hours of services learning to agencies related to social welfare policy initiatives. Agencies that work to promote social justice, health care, social equality as well as working to end homelessness and hunger will be targeted as services learning sites.

POL 111-American National Government or POL112 State and Local Government

This course will integrate 5 hours of services learning into the course learning outcomes. Students will learn about the legal and policy structure of our national, state and local governments. The relationship between these structures and social policy will be examined.

Psychology 105-Group Dynamics

Students enrolled in this course will be assigned to conduct 10 hours of services learning to agencies in the Greater Hartford Area. Specifically they will be assigned to work in groups and be expected to relate their experience to the theoretical framework of the course.

The CCSU/SWP has developed a new *“Transfer Field Experience/Services Learning Form”* (See H) to assist all transfer students in identifying the social work related field experiences or service learning opportunities they have acquired at their respective colleges and universities.

**Seamless Transfer from CCC/SSP to CCSU SWP**

Collaboration between both institutions provides the opportunity to make transferring a seamless process. Several documents have been revised and new forms are in place to assist students in the transferring to the Social Work Program at Central Connecticut State University.

The following material will facilitate this process:



- CCC/SSP “*Description of Core Social Services Degree Courses*” (See N)
- CCC/SSP “*Application for Graduation Audit*” (See G)
- CCC/SSP “*E-Portfolio Weblink*” \* (See I)
- CCSU/SWP “*Transfer Student Field Experience & Services Learning Form*” (See F)
- CCSU/SWP “*Transfer Student Reference Form*” (See H)
- CCSU/SWP “*Application for the SWP Junior Status*” (See J)
- CCSU/SWP “*Student Portfolio Guidelines*” (See K)
- CCSU/SWP “*Personal Narrative*” (See L)
- CCSU/SWP “*Description of Core Social Work Courses*” (See O)
- CCC/SSP “*Social Services Program Curriculum Sheet*” (See P)
- CCSU/SWP “*Curriculum Work Sheet*” (See Q)
- CCSU/SWP “*Pre Social Work Assessment of Writing*” (See R)

The “*Transfer Student Reference Form*” has been revised in discussion with CCC/SSP.

This form will be completed by the community college human services or social services program coordinator. Coordinators will conduct an assessment of the student in eight areas of professional social work attitudes and behavior, and writing skills. At CCSU/SWP a similar form is completed for pre-social work majors in SW 226 by an agency social work supervisor where the student has been placed for the semester (70 hours). The “*Transfer Field Experience/Services Learning Form*” and the “*Transfer Student Reference Form*” will also assist the community college student the opportunity to build and develop their E-Portfolio. Twice a year in November and April the CCSU/SWP will host an “Orientation to the Social Work Profession forum for the CCC/SSP major (See S). This forum will include experiential group activities, and speakers will be invited to highlight two unique fields of practice. Pathway information to the social work

profession will orient students on the social work curriculum and in developing the student portfolio as an extension of the E-Portfolio being developed simultaneously at Capital Community College. The E-Portfolio\* is a personalized web-based collections of the accomplishments or interests while enrolled at Capital Community College. The selections might include evidence from coursework. Students will be asked to upload their syllabi and completed assignments of courses that they have taken while enrolled in the social services degree program. They can also include artifacts from extra-curricular activities and reflective annotations and commentary related to their experiences.

### **Writing in the Social Work Profession**

The CCSU/SWP will utilize a revised writing rubric developed by Capital Community College titled "Holistic Scoring Schema & Analytic Rubric" (2001-02). For the purpose of the CCSU Social Work Program this rubric will be referred to as the "*Pre-Social Work Assessment of Writing Competence*" (See R). The assessment scale will be used to assess the writing skills of all pre-social work majors in the following four areas: Purpose & Assignment, Organization, Development and Language Use. The Social Work faculty will use the Portfolio Narrative and one SW 226 assignment to assess writing competence. Students will be assessed on a five point scale. This process reflects the scaling used to assess students upon application to the program: Grade Point Average of 2.5 or better, Awareness of Diversity and Populations at Risk, Field/Service Learning, and Self-Awareness.

### **Adjunct Faculty Mentoring Orientation**

The importance of having MSW full-time and adjunct faculty is fundamental to the credibility of any human services program that promotes transition from the community college

to four-year BSW programs. In this light, a yearly adjunct faculty mentoring orientation will be hosted by CCSU/SWP in collaboration with the Social Services Program at CCC.

An orientation has been developed encompassing two components. The first component addresses key elements of social work education: curriculum, social work themes, field education, educational resources, and writing for the profession. The second component provides an orientation to CCSU campus environment and staff. This will include a campus tour, “meet and greet” admissions, advising, and financial aid staff. Hopefully this exposure will help faculty learn about the university to be able to communicate first hand about CCSU resources to Capital students. We expect that this process will facilitate an informal faculty to faculty mentoring relationship.

#### **Advisory Board Discussion of Transition Plan**

The Transition Plan was presented and discussed with great enthusiasm by advisory board members in respective programs. We have included in this narrative report documentation of the following meetings agenda’s.

- CCSU Field Instructors Meeting (See T-1)
- CCSU Social Work Program Advisory Board (See T-2)
- CCC Social Services Program Advisory Board. (See T-3)

#### **Future Plans**

Beyond the collaborative project, faculty from both programs has identified several future activities that will enhance the relationship at a student, faculty, and institutional level. The activities will include:

- An evening at the Hartford Stage Theater to view the theatrical production of *Crowns*, a play that tells a story about African American women and the role of hats (hence analogous to a crown) in African American culture and history. Students from both programs will be in attendance allowing them to interact with each other outside the academic setting.
- Faculty members will collaborate on a workshop proposal for the 2005 Baccalaureate Program Directors Conference (BPD). This proposal will promote the importance of establishing collaborative projects of this nature among community colleges and four year degree colleges or universities. Hopefully, this will be the catalyst to the discussion of incorporating associate level two year degree programs to the overall pathway in social work education.