

Status Report to the Joint Committee on Appropriations  
South Dakota State Legislature

Master of Social Work Degree Program  
The University of South Dakota

Fall 2010

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On April 6, 2009 the Joint Committee on Appropriations of the South Dakota Legislature requested quarterly reports summarizing the status of the new Masters Degree in Social Work at The University of South Dakota. Following is the fourth quarterly report by the University to discuss each of the areas requested by the Committee.

### **Time frame for program implementation and estimated number of students**

As indicated in the previous quarterly reports, academic year 2009-2010 was a year for planning. The plan was to create the MSW Program including the curriculum and initial accreditation documents and admit the first cohort of students to begin course work in the fall semester of 2010.

Initially the plan was to admit 10 students, however, we determined that the program could handle 12 students for the foundation year and another 12 students would join the foundation year students during the concentration year. A cohort of 12 concentration students would be admitted each year after the first admitted cohort and 12 foundation students every other year. This would give us 24 students for our first graduating class of MSWs. The following is the estimated enrollment:

Master of Social Work Program	Fiscal Years of Program			
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14
New Students Admitted	12	12	24	12
Total Students in the Program (each fall)	12	24	24	24
Graduates	0	24	12	24

### Number of Faculty Hired Per Year

In order to become an accredited program, The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires six faculty positions for a Master's programs. Utilizing existing resources, four new faculty positions were created, and one CSA secretarial position was created. Faculty would be hired incrementally as the program was developed over a period of three years. The time line for hiring faculty and a CSA secretary to fully staff the MSW program follows:

#### 2009-2010 Academic Year (FY2010)

- 1 MSW Program Director
- 1 Department Field Education Director
- 1 0.50 FTE CSA Secretary

The positions of MSW Program Director and Field Education Director were filled in August 2009. The CSA secretarial position was filled in the fall of 2009. However, the secretary recently resigned and a search is in process to again fill this position.

#### 2010-2011 Academic Year (FY2011)

- 1 MSW Program Faculty Member

This position has been filled.

#### 2011-2012 Academic Year (FY2012)

- 1 MSW Program Faculty Member

This position has been posted and applications are currently being accepted.

#### Estimated Costs Per Year

The following program operation costs are estimates that are taken from the final proposed budget for this program as submitted to the Board of Regents. We continue to estimate costs essentially as described – no changes to the budget have been made.

<u>1<sup>st</sup> Year FY10</u>	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> Year-FY11</u>	<u>3<sup>rd</sup> Year FY12</u>	<u>4<sup>th</sup> Year-FY13</u>	<u>5<sup>th</sup> Year-FY14</u>	<u>6<sup>th</sup> Year-FY15</u>
\$319,000.00	\$388,438.00	\$461,000.00	\$471,500.00	\$467,000.00	\$474,500.00

The first half of the Program funding needs were appropriated in the 2009 legislative session. The second half of the funding was not legislatively appropriated, but has been committed by the South Dakota Board of Regents so that the Program can begin on time. The program began in the fall of 2010 with 12 students.

#### **MSW Program Development Progress**

The Department of Social Work has developed the MSW program, including the complete curriculum. The MSW will be offered in two formats. For students who possess a baccalaureate degree in social work, BSW/BSSW, a 36 credit hour advanced standing concentration curriculum will be offered. For students who do not possess a baccalaureate degree in social work, a 60 credit hour foundation and concentration curriculum will be offered.

The degree program has two formats in order to maximize enrollment which will include graduates of accredited undergraduate social work programs located in South Dakota and the surrounding states, as well as individuals who possess a non-social work Bachelor Degree that are currently employed in the social or human services fields.

Minor adjustments were made to the initial curriculum proposal and submitted to the Board of Regents and approved.

#### The MSW Advisory Council

An MSW Program Advisory Council has been formed made up of members from the social work community. All members of the Advisory Council hold an MSW degree and are representatives of the social work community across the state, including MSW degreed social workers from two Native American Reservations.

The MSW Advisory Council meet twice each year. To date, the Advisory Council has met three times. The Council met in October 2009 and May of 2010. The Council members reviewed the plans for the establishment of the Advanced Generalist concentration, plans for the curriculum, admissions requirements, expected competencies that will measure the student's integration of knowledge and skills, and consulted on issues of cultural diversity. They also

provided consultation on potential sites for MSW internships and offered to act as off site supervisors in the event an agency did not have an MSW available for supervisory purposes for the graduate interns. Additionally, several members have assisted the Director of the MSW Program in marketing the program. Various members have facilitated introductions to the social work community at agencies in Rapid City, Spear Fish, and Pierre. They assisted in the setting up of two information sessions open to the social service community and other interested persons in Pierre.

The Council met with the CSWE Commissioner when the program sat for Candidacy in October 2010. The Commissioner was very impressed with the commitment from the members of the Advisory Council and their contributions to the creation of the program.

### **Accreditation Procedures and Progress**

The MSW program is in the third year of a six year process for accreditation that began when the initial proposal went forward to the Board of Regents.

In October 2010 Dr. Cheryl Waites, Associate Dean from Wayne State University in Detroit Michigan was assigned by the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Commission On Accreditation (COA) to conduct the Candidacy visit for the MSW Program. Dr. Waites spent 1.5 days in Sioux Falls with the faculty. During that time she met with the President of the University, the Dean of the School of Health Sciences, the Dean of the Medical School, the Chair of the Department, the MSW Program Director, the department faculty as a whole, the MSW Advisory Council, and the MSW students. She was extremely impressed with the written program and the strong support the Department of Social Work receives from the University, community and students. Dr. Waites provided some very helpful insight and consultation for the writing of Benchmark II.

In her report to the Commission on Accreditation (COA), Dr. Waites recommended that the MSW Program at the University of South Dakota be granted Candidacy. The Commission on Accreditation will meet in February 2011 and determine the granting of Candidacy. We are very confident that the recommendations of Dr. Waites will be accepted and the program will be granted full Candidacy at that meeting.

In her verbal and written reports, Dr. Waites noted the superb leadership of the MSW program from the MSW Program Director and Associate Professor, Dr. Elizabeth Talbot. Dr. Waites commented that the Benchmark I report compiled by Dr. Talbot was so thorough that much of it can be applied to Benchmark II, putting us well-ahead of schedule. Dr. Waites also complimented the excellent community work of Field Education Director and Assistant Professor, Deborah Aden, as well as the overall competence of the Social Work Faculty: Dr. Debra Norris, Dr. Jarod Giger, Dr. Peter Kindle, and Prof. Kathy LaPlante.

At this point, the program is on track for accreditation. The faculty are working together to write the Benchmark II document that is due August 1, 2011.

### **Recruitment of Faculty**

The Department has undergone considerable change since last year. The department Chair person and another faculty person retired in May 2010. The Department has hired a new

Chair person, Dr. Michael Lawler, who comes with many years of administrative experience as a chair person, researcher and scholar. The Department also hired two new faculty members, Dr. Giger and Dr. Kindle, one to replace the faculty person who retired and one to fill the position created for the MSW program. Dr. Giger and Dr. Kindle have excellent social work backgrounds for teaching in the MSW program and fulfilling the faculty needs of the department. All three of the newly hired faculty will have teaching responsibilities in both the MSW and BSW programs. The department is currently involved in a search to fill the fourth position created for the MSW program.

### **Recruitment of Students**

The department was very pleased with the response of the community to offering of the MSW program. In the spring of 2010 the department reviewed approximately 40 completed applications for the 12 positions offered for the first foundation 2-year MSW program. The faculty admissions committee screened the applications and interviewed 22 applicants. Twelve students were admitted to the program and a wait list of 8 applicants was created. All twelve students who began the program in the fall of 2010 have continued in the program.

The department is preparing to admit the first group of advanced standing students who will join the foundation/regular 2-year program students in May 2011. There are currently 21 completed applications as of January 14, 2011. The graduate school has an additional 5-10 applications being processed for submission to the department. The deadline for applications is January 17, 2011 and we expect that on that date there will be at least 4-6 more applications arriving to be processed. From this group of applicants, the program will be able to admit 12 advanced standing students. All but two of the applicants at this point are from South Dakota.

### **Practicum Sites**

The MSW Field Education Director has been very creative in locating appropriate field sites for the MSW students. Due to the dearth of MSW credentialed social workers in South Dakota, many members of the advisory board and social work community members have been called upon to provide off site MSW supervision. An off-site supervisor is an MSW volunteer who agrees to provide supervision to a student interning in an agency setting, able to provide graduate level instruction and experiential learning, but does not have an MSW on staff to provide the supervision. The MSW volunteer provides 1-hour of face to face supervision to the student each week. The student also has a site supervisor who oversees the daily assignments and social work experiences.

The city locations of social work internship sites are listed on the program's website.

### **Program Time and Location**

The University believed that offering the program in Sioux Falls would best accommodate working students and those commuting from across the state. Approval from the South Dakota Board of Regents to offer the MSW program at the Health Sciences Center on the Sanford campus in Sioux Falls was granted at the March 31 BOR meeting in Aberdeen. In his comments after the approval was granted, Dr. Jack Warner, the executive director of the Regents, said "the intent is to make [the program] more convenient and accessible for a greater number of students, many of whom work full time while taking care of their families."

The program concurs with Dr. Warner's comments. We have found that students are appreciative of the reduced travel time and easier access to the MSW program. We currently have a student driving from the Rapid City area. The location of the program in Sioux Falls has reduced her overall travel time by 2 hours.

The Department has also implemented other ways to reduce travel time for students, and a way to reduce the amount of time students must take away from employment and family. The program is spread across 6 semesters within a period of 24 months. And all the classes are offered on Monday only.

### **Community Partnerships**

As social workers the faculty are committed to serving the social work community. In the spring of 2010, the Department partnered with the local South Dakota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-SD). NASW-SD has regularly offered Continuing Education Credits through monthly meetings with presentations from local social work practitioners. Through the DDN network available at the Health Sciences building in Sioux Falls, the department of Social Work is hosting the NASW-SD CEU sessions and broadcasting them across South Dakota. The Executive Director of NASW-SD has opened the Sioux Falls based CEU sessions to the entire social worker community and has offered other social service providers across the state the opportunity to participate in these session. The sessions and CEUs are free.

We are excited to partner with NASW. Most communities across South Dakota do not have enough social workers to support regular CEU sessions. This brings together the social work community and related professions together with the Department of Social Work to support continuing education and life-long learning.

The MSW students attend these 1-hour professional sessions as a part of their field seminar class. There have been seven monthly sessions since May 2010. Each month the attendance in Sioux Falls is greater, and more sites across the state are tuning in.

The Department has also worked with the South Dakota Board of Social Work to create Senate Bill No. 16. The passing of this bill will allow our new MSW graduates to become licensed during the period of time the program is in candidacy.

### **Summary**

In summary, we are very pleased to report that the MSW program is on schedule for accreditation. We fully expect that Candidacy will be granted by the CSWE Commission on Accreditation in February 2011. The 700 page Benchmark I document submitted in February 2010 was considered nearly flawless by the Commissioner. Once Candidacy is granted the accreditation is *retroactive to the first graduated class* of MSW students. We expect to sit for full accreditation in the fall of 2013 and be granted accreditation at the February 2014 Commission On Accreditation meeting.