

I&II. Objective, course/learning experience

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The social work education program accrediting body, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), issued the new Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) in 2008. The EPAS addresses the competencies for graduates of social work programs identifying the competencies that students should have as social workers. It is up to each social work program to delineate the specific level of competence that BSW and/or MSW graduates should have at the conclusion of its program. The social work faculty reviewed the 2008 Educational Policy to determine its fit with the JMU-BSW Educational Objectives/Competencies. The competencies are stated in the language of the accrediting body to avoid any confusion on the part of the site visitors assigned by CSWE to review the JMU-BSW Program.

Faculty reviews the educational objectives/competencies annually in the end of year/beginning of year summit with the last major changes occurring in September 2008. This effort revised the objectives/competencies to effectively align them with the new 2008 CSWE EPAS competencies. One change occurred in the September 2009 review. Spirituality was added to Educational Objective/Competency 4 – Engage diversity and difference in practice.

At the conclusion of the JMU-BSW Program social work graduates should meet the following Educational Objectives/Competencies.

Educational Objective/Competency 1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. [EP 2.1.1]

Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers

- advocate for client access to the services of social work;
- practice personal reflection, demonstrating a commitment to reflecting on and strengthening those areas deemed necessary for effective professional practice and continued professional development;
- utilize the various social work roles including enabler/facilitator, mobilizer, broker, advocate and mediator;
- clarify one's role, purpose, and boundaries to develop and maintain helping relationships.
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication, including professional writing and documentation;
- engage in career-long learning; and
- use supervision and consultation.

Comment [A1]: This statement indicates what level of students are to be assessed (graduating Social Work BSW students). Articulating the level of student to be assessed corresponds to an aspect of Rubric Element I. A.

Comment [A2]: Notice that all the primary objectives clearly state, using precise action verbs (e.g., advocate, conduct, apply), what students are expected to know think or do. Using precise verbs and rich descriptions can help guide methods for assessing the objectives and corresponds to Element I. A.

*For space considerations, only 2 of the 10 Social Work objectives are presented throughout this APT.

Educational Objective/Competency 2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. [EP 2.1.2]

Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers

- differentiate personal, professional and client value systems;
- recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice;
- establish and maintain professional relationships in keeping with the NASW Code of Ethics;
- make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles;
- tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and
- apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

Attachment 1

Educational Objectives/Competencies of the Social Work Program Delivered through Core Social Work Courses (Revised August 25, 2009)

Students graduating from the JMU-BSW Program will be prepared for competent beginning generalist professional social work practice grounded in the strengths, empowerment and social justice perspectives with client systems including individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions and communities. [Legend: L = learning; S = Simulate; A = Applied]

Comment [A3]: The following Table conveys where each objective is covered in the Social Work curricula. Notice that each objective is covered in at least one course. This alignment satisfies Element II of the APT rubric.

*Note that the table has been shortened for space considerations.

Core Social Work Courses	SOWK 287	SOWK 288	SOWK 305	SOWK 317	SOWK 320	SOWK 335	SOWK 465	SOWK 466	SOWK 467	SOWK 481/482	SOWK494
1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers:											
a. advocate for client access to the services of social work;						A				A	
b. practice personal reflection, demonstrating a commitment to reflecting on and strengthening those areas deemed necessary for effective professional practice and continued professional development;	L	L		A			A	A	A	A	A
c. utilize the various social work roles including enabler/facilitator, mobilizer, broker, advocate and mediator;	L			L			S	S	S	A	S
d. clarify one's role, purpose, and boundaries to develop and maintain helping relationships.				L			S	S	S	A	S
e. demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication, including professional writing and documentation;			S	LS		S	S	S	S	A	S

Core Social Work Courses	SOWK 287	SOWK 288	SOWK 305	SOWK 317	SOWK 320	SOWK 335	SOWK 465	SOWK 466	SOWK 467	SOWK 481/482	SOWK494
f. engage in career-long learning; and	L						LS	LS	LS	LS	S
g. use supervision and consultation				LS			S	S	S	A	S
2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:											
a. differentiate personal, professional and client value systems;	L	L		L	L		S	S	S	A	S
b. recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice;	L			L			S	S	S	A	
c. establish and maintain professional relationships in keeping with the NASW Code of Ethics;				L			S	S	S	A	
d. make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles;			L				S	S	S	A	S
e. tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and						L	S	S	S	A	
f. apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.						L	S			A	S

III. Evaluation/Assessment Methods

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The senior assessment program is multi-faceted, using five methods implemented prior to the end of the student's senior year. First, students must meet all criteria necessary for graduation from the Social Work Program and the University. Second, completion of the Social Work Information Literacy Test occurs at the end of first term senior year. The SW-ILT test is embedded in a required core social work course.

In the final senior semester other methods include a written comprehensive exam and an oral exam that are embedded in SOWK 494 Senior Seminar (capstone) and all students must successfully complete the field practicum experience (SOWK 481/481) where the field practicum evaluation is completed, ensuring 100% of majors participate in outcome assessments. The capstone is the culmination of the learning, simulating and applying knowledge gained through the core social work course and their field experience. The field practicum evaluation is given at the mid-point of the semester and at its conclusion. Each year outcome assessment results, curriculum and program reviews are used to review and, if appropriate, to revise the examinations and/or field evaluation.

Historically, there existed a table, "Educational Objectives and Match with Outcome Assessment", illustrating how educational objectives were linked to outcome assessment methods. *Attachment 5*, "Educational Objectives/Competencies and Match with Outcome Assessment", provides the linkage of the comprehensive exam and field practicum to the educational objectives/competencies. The linkage of the comprehensive exam was done with CARS staff in August 2008 and Fall 2010. The oral exam analysis was conducted in 2010-2011. Mapping of items on the written comprehensive exam, oral exam and social work information literacy exam to the educational objectives/competencies serve to balance coverage of the educational objectives/competencies strengthening the validity of our outcome assessment measures.

As noted in Section I&II, we have mapped the educational objectives/competencies to the core social work courses (See *Attachment 1*) which serves to strengthen validity as does faculty identification of program-driven assignments that have been agreed to be assigned every time any course/or course section is offered regardless of who is teaching the course. The SW-ILT embedded in core social work courses occurs regardless of who is teaching the course.

In addition to the outcome assessment measures identified above, a Student Motivation Scale is administered with the goal of determining what students think and feel about department assessment activities.

Comment [A4]: In this paragraph the program discusses how the assessment measures were specifically aligned to the program's objectives (displayed in Attachment 5). Clear linkage between measures and objectives is an important component of Element III. A.

Attachment 5

Educational Objectives/Competencies and Match with Outcome Assessment (9/11/11)

Students graduating from the JMU-BSW Program will be prepared for competent beginning generalist professional social work practice grounded in the strengths, empowerment and social justice perspectives with client systems including individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions and communities.

Comment [A5]: As noted previously, the following table provides a clear connection between the assessment instruments (described in depth subsequently) and the objectives they measure. Aligning the instruments to objectives corresponds to Element III. A. Notice that for some objectives specific items from the written and oral comprehensive exams are linked to the objectives. This is exemplary practice and would help receive a rating of 4 on this element.

*Table includes measures for objectives 1 and 2 only for space considerations.

Educational Objectives/Competencies	New Written Comp	Oral Exam Fall 2011	PDA	SOWK/ ILT	Field Practicum [Supervisor Evaluation of Student Performance]
<p>1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers:</p>					
<p>a. advocate for client access to the services of social work;</p>					E
<p>b. practice personal reflection, demonstrating a commitment to reflecting on and strengthening those areas deemed necessary for effective professional practice and continued professional development;</p>		1-3, 14	287 LAP 287 CSL 287 Eco-map 287 Multicultural 465 Genogram 465 Cultural Competency 465 Practice Group		E

			Lab		
c. utilize the various social work roles including enabler, educator, facilitator, mobilizer, broker, advocate and mediator;		1-3	287 LAP 287 CSL 287 Eco-map 287 Multicultural 335 Policy Proposal 467 Macro Project		
d. clarify one's role, purpose, and boundaries to develop and maintain helping relationships.		1-3	465 Ethical Dilemmas Test 466 Agency Profile 467 Macro Project FIM (formerly FFI mtgs – needs measure)		E
e. demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication, including professional writing and documentation;	32	15-19	287 Lap 287 Prof. Documentation 305 APA Guidelines 317 Social History 317 Intake form 335 Policy Proposal 465 Practice Group		E

			Lab 467 Macro Project		
f. engage in career-long learning; and			287 CSL 287 Multicultural 465 Cultural Competency Senior Cap, FIM	11	
g. use supervision and consultation			465 Genogram 465 Practice Group Lab 467 Macro Project SCR		E
2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:					
a. differentiate personal, professional and client value systems;	33		287 Lap 287 CSL 287 Eco-map 335 Media Logs 465 Ethical		E

			Dilemmas Test J or FIM		
b. recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice;	31		287 Lap 287 CSL 465 Ethical Dilemmas Test FIM IIHHS - IPC		E
c. establish and maintain professional relationships in keeping with the NASW Code of Ethics;	4, 29, 33	2, 20	305 CITI Test FIM		E
d. make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles;	30, 45, 46		335 Media log 335 policy 465 Ethical Dilemmas Test	16	E
e. tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and	45		465 Ethical Dilemmas Test FIM		E
f. apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.	32, 45		335 Policy Analysis 465 Ethical Dilemmas Test IIHHS - IPC		

Comprehensive Written Exam

This year represents a significant change in our written comprehensive assessment. Twenty percent of the students' final grade in the course is based on their performance on this exam. Historically, the written comprehensive exam was designed to evaluate theoretical content, knowledge base and skill base. The student received four scores; a total test score and a score for each of three subtests - context, knowledge and practice. The student had to pass this test in order to take the oral examination. The departmental grading scale was utilized with the lowest C score (74) being the lowest acceptable passing grade for the comprehensive. The student who failed had to repeat the appropriate subtest(s) six weeks after taking the first test. If a student passed the total test but failed a subtest, that subtest was repeated to receive a passing score. It should be noted that the student's first test score was the one used for program evaluation purposes.

During the August 2008 Summit, the Center for Assessment and Research Studies (CARS) conducted a workshop for faculty with the goal of moving from a norm referenced to a criterion referenced exam. This work continues as part of the end of year/beginning of year faculty summit where efforts are reviewed. No items were modified for the 2008-2009 or 2009-2010 written comprehensive exam. The exam contained 143 questions and a pilot section of 17 new items in order to have students evaluate the relevance and difficulties of the items. In 2010-2011, 17 pilot items were included within the body of the exam increasing the total number of questions to 160. The test items were written by faculty to correspond to the previous educational objectives.

At the same time, based on agreed upon changes to a criterion referenced exam faculty with CARS assistance, worked to develop a new case based written comprehensive exam that was beta tested with members of the Spring 2011 senior cohort where students were they able to share their perspective of this new exam process. It was not used to determine outcome assessment. This test was delivered in a written format. Based on comments adjustments were made over Summer 2011 by faculty to determine the appropriateness of each item, match to the corresponding educational objective/competency and write additional questions as appropriate. At the beginning of the Fall 2011 term faculty summit final approval of the new comprehensive written exam occurred in preparation for its official launch that term. Items were placed on the JMU Qualtrics system by CARS for delivery, to promote confidential evaluation of student efforts and to promote ease for evaluation of results.

As stated above, the written comprehensive exam is given in the context of SOWK 494 where 100% of our majors participate. For the academic year 2011-2012 no student cut off score was determined for the written comprehensive exam, as data to make such a decision had not been collected. All students taking the test received a calculated score based on the number of attempted questions and the number correct. In evaluating the test, if no student got an item correct it was not used to determine students' final score. There was consistency across fall and spring terms as to which items indicated reliability or item construction/delivery concerns. Those items will be reviewed over the summer.

Comment [A6]: The following paragraphs provide great detail describing all the instruments used for assessment. Generally, these paragraphs elucidate the manner in which measures align with the program objectives (III. A), whether they are direct or indirect measures (III. B), and the integrity of the data collection design (III. D).

Of note, all objectives are measured by at least one direct instrument. This satisfies the exemplary category of Element III. B.

The data collection procedures are also very clearly described and reflect strong assessment practices.

Comment [A7]: Including the written comprehensive exam as a part of the course grade inherently speaks to the motivation of the students. Adequate motivation of students participating in the assessment is an important aspect of assessment and corresponds to Element III. D of the APT rubric. Potential methods to gauge student motivation for non-course embedded assessments include student motivation surveys and proctor observations for example.

Comment [A8]: In this sentence the program specifies the number of students assessed by the comprehensive exam. Because all graduating students in the program are assessed by the instrument, the sample is inherently representative of the graduating students (Element III. D). Obtaining a census is certainly not a requirement of assessment. Nevertheless, programs should strive for samples representative of the population of interest (e.g., graduating Social Work majors).

The comprehensive exam has been revised eleven times since its inception. Test results by year are available on site.

The table below is drawn from information provided by CARS are for each of past semesters during which the written comprehensive exam was given.

Reliability and Passing Grades by Cohort

Cohort	Number in Class	Reliability on Total Test K=143	Reliability on Context Subtest K = 34	Reliability on Knowledge Subtest K = 72	Reliability on Practice Subtest K= 43	Number Passing	Percent Passing
2008 Fall	11	.75	.44	.71	.43	8	73%
2009 Spring	41	.73	.47	.70	.20	35	
2009 Fall	15	.71	.63	.56	.21	9	60%
2010 Spring	34	.74	.56	.63	.38	27	79%
Fall 2010	14	.79	.47	.70	.48	9	64%
Spring 2011	36	.79	.47	.70	.48	28	78%

Comment [A9]: This table displays the reliability information and history of results (Element IV. B.) for the Comprehensive written exam.

The high reliability estimates for the Total test and knowledge subtest (> .60) offer the program evidence that the scores obtained from the ETS field test are consistent. The program may look to improve the moderate reliabilities seen in the Practice and Context subtests. Reliability evidence falls under Element III. E.

Scores on New Written Comprehensive

The new written comprehensive exam is case based. Students are presented a professional case determined by the faculty to be at the beginning generalist level. This is the standard for graduating BSW students. Questions were developed and reviewed by faculty in conjunction with CARS as part of our transition to a criterion reference exam. Items on the new written comprehensive were matched to educational objectives/competencies. Each match was evaluated for correlation to the educational objective/competency matched and item difficulty. See Attachment 6 – Comprehensive Written Exam CARS Report for the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012. This information will be reviewed over the summer for fall adjustments by the faculty.

Comment [A10]: Note, Attachment 6 is not provided because of space considerations. However, the alignment of items to specific objectives can be seen in Attachment 5. Multiple faculty aligning specific items to objectives is excellent assessment practice and aligns with Element III. A.

Item-objective correlations could not be computed for Educational Objective/Competency 1 and 5, as these only had one item. Item difficulty is presented for these two objectives/competencies.

[Embedded images below randomly would not load. They are contained in the APT Image document per Plan B of instructions. AND can be found as part of the WORD version of this document attached.]

Objective 1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly

Note: Item difficulty = 0.50

Objective 5: Advance human rights and social and economic justice

Note: Item difficulty = 0.53

Item difficulties and item-objective correlations for all other educational objective/competencies are reported below.

Objective 2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice

Item Difficulties and Item-Objective Correlations:

Item	Item Difficulty	Item-Objective Correlation
4	0.44	0.03
29	0.24	0.21
30	0.69	0.14
31	0.74	0.23
32	0.50	0.12
33	0.59	0.00
45	0.63	0.09
46	0.73	0.04

Comment [A11]: Item difficulties (proportion of students obtaining the correct answer) and item-objective correlations also help assess the quality of an assessment instrument (Element III. E)

This information is also important to help guide potential revisions to assessment instruments, which can be documented and address Element VI. B.

Objective 3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments

Item Difficulties and Item-Objective Correlations:

Item	Item Difficulty	Item-Objective Correlation
6-9A	0.77	0.41
6-9B	0.69	0.25
6-9C	0.56	0.44
6-9D	0.54	0.30
6-9E	0.99	0.11
6-9F	0.59	0.32
45	0.63	0.12

54	0.39	0.14
55	0.01	0.20
56	0.83	0.16
57	0.86	0.26

Objective 4: Engage in diversity and difference in practice

Item Difficulties and Item-Objective Correlations:

Item	Item Difficulty	Item-Objective Correlation
33	0.59	0.12
35	0.99	0.20
49	1.00	NA
50	1.00	NA
56	0.83	0.18
57	0.86	0.12

One hundred percent of all graduating majors complete the written comprehensive exam as it is embedded in SOWK 494. The initial assessment for items that seem not to show positive correlations leave us unsure as to if this is due to the item construction or the application of technology attached to the questions. There seems to be consistency in the types of questions by format that students struggled. These specific questions will be reviewed at the fall 2012 faculty summit. Faculty will continue to improve on this new written comprehensive as part of our continual evaluation and program renewal process with a goal for improving reliability.

Oral Exam

As with the comprehensive exam, the oral is given in the context of SOWK 494 so 100% of our majors participate. Oral exam performance comprises 25% of the student’s grade in the course. The oral exam was designed by faculty to evaluate the student in the areas of critical thinking, problem solving, application of theory and knowledge base to social work practice, and self-assessment as well as professional identity. The rating form/rubric for the oral exam was designed by the faculty for the Spring 1988 assessment and has been revised eleven times. A revision occurred prior to the fall 2010 to reorder the questions in an effort to frame them in a more logical sequence and to strengthen anchors. The last revision occurred at the end of May 2012 for this same purpose. The last few revisions have been in an attempt to strengthen the anchors in the professional identification section.

Each semester the faculty (7) conducts two-three oral exams together to assist in establishing inter-rater reliability. Prior to spring 2011, they then broke into three teams, two with two

Comment [A12]: Multiple faculty are used to rate student performance helping to mitigate rater error/bias (Element III. D). In addition, using multiple raters allows the program to assess inter-rater reliability, which could be used as validity evidence in Element III. E.

members and one with three. In spring 2011 due the medical leave of one faculty member, the teams consisted of two members each. In fall 2012 the faculty of six members (AUH no longer participates) conducted two oral exams together to establish inter-rater reliability then broke into three teams of two. This was repeated for Spring 2012.

During an oral exam the student is asked a series of questions by faculty members, scores are given independently, then reconciled at the completion of the oral. Faculty scores are calculated and a base score for the exam is determined. Students must score two of five on each question. Scores are linked to faculty established question anchors. If a student answers any question inadequately (>2), she/he must return and address the question to the reviewer's (faculty member) satisfaction. It should be noted that the student's first responses are the ones used for outcome assessment purposes.

CARS completes a study on the administration of the oral exam each semester and produces a report. Following is the executive summary form the fall 2011-spring 2012 report. See Attachment 7 for the complete report.

Executive Summary

- Finding: As in the past, raters were consistent in ordering student performance and task difficulty. Recommendation: There is no need to increase the number of raters per student.
- Finding: As expected, different students score higher on different tasks (questions on the rubric). Recommendation: Keep the number of tasks at least at the current level to avoid disadvantaging any student by the particular sample of tasks.
- The standard error of measurement (used for comparing a student's score to a standard), was 0.24, on the 0-5 scale.
- The G-coefficient (a type of reliability index), was .90. Values above .80 are generally recommended; the values for this sample meet these criteria.
- The adjudication process led to only very small differences in student scores.

Comment [A13]: Another example of reliability analysis (Element III. E).

Oral Exam in Social Work Test Scores

	Number in Class	Total Test	Scores High score Total Test	Average Score	Number passing	Percent passing
Semester		Low score Total Test				

Spring 2009	41	72	96	84	40	97.5%
Fall 2009	15	73	93	82.4	14	93%
Spring 2010	34	73	95	89.85	33	97%
Fall 2010	14	76	92	76.85	14	100%
Spring 2011	36	74	100	84.69	36	100%
Fall 2011	19	68	100	84.52	17	89.4
Spring 2012	49	62	100	84.75	45	91.8

Field Practicum Evaluation Instrument Each social work major completes a field practicum generally during his/her last semester that consists of a minimum of 472 of supervised practice in an agency setting. Mid-way through the field practicum the student evaluates herself and is evaluated by the agency field supervisor. The evaluation form was updated and linked to the educational objectives/competencies prior to Fall 2011 (See attachment 5). The student and supervisor review the evaluation together at which time the student's educational needs for the remainder of the field experience are addressed. At the conclusion of the practicum a similar evaluation process occurs. These evaluations address the student's ability to integrate knowledge and skill and demonstrate this ability in a practice setting. As of fall 2011 these evaluations are conducted through an online system. In general, students must receive scores of two of five in a majority of areas to successfully pass field. We are currently working with CARS to determine how to better use the results of these evaluations as well as other field practicum assignments in our outcome assessment program.

Student Motivation Scale The student motivation scale was developed by the assessment officer and given to students completing outcome assessment in social work at the conclusion of each semester since the spring 1996 semester. This scale is designed to demonstrate the level of motivation of students completing the outcome assessment measures, specifically the written comprehensive and oral exams in the social work major. CARS determined that it would be more effective to have the student complete the Student Motivation Survey immediately following the completion of the written comprehensive exam and then again immediately following completion of the oral exam. This strategy was implemented in spring 2010. Information the current Student Motivational Survey was unavailable from CARS.

Expected results While faculty has an idea of how students should perform, there has not been any formal process to evaluate our expected results. Our work with CARS will guide as in determining benchmarks for our outcome measures.

Comment [A14]: As noted previously, assessing student motivation is critical student motivation will impact what kind of inferences can be made about the data and helps address Element III. D. For this assessment, the program uses the Student Motivation Scale to evaluate whether students are exerting effort on the assessment.

Comment [A15]: The faculty note that expected student performance will be evaluated in the future. Setting and justifying expected results for students corresponds to Element III. C.

To improve this section, statement of desired or expected results could be made more explicit and rationale could be provided.

IV. Objective Accomplishments/Results

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Meaning of results: The results of all three of the above measures provide some indication of the success of the curriculum content, program-driven assignments and instructional methods. Even allowing for individual student ability and effort, we can identify areas in which the curriculum content may need bolstering as well as determine effectiveness of program-driven assignments and instructional methods.

Comment [A16]: The following sections provide a clear and detailed presentation of the assessment results. The program also incorporates statistical analyses when appropriate. Presentation of results relates to Element IV. A. This section could be improved by making the link between objectives and the results more explicit.

Comprehensive Written Exam

Results for the 2008-2009, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 years follow.

For fall 2008, eight of 11 students passed the total test with five of these also passing all subtests. Three of these students had to repeat one subtest with one needing to repeat two. For spring 2009, 35 of 41 passed the total test with 25 passing all subtests. Ten passed the total test but needed to repeat one subtest.

For fall 2009, nine of 15 students passed the total test with six of these also passing all subtests. Two of these students had to repeat one subtest with one needing to repeat two. For spring 2010, 27 of 34 passed the total test with 21 passing all subtests. Six of these students had to repeat one subtest.

For fall 2010, nine of 14 students passed the total test with five of these also passing all subtests. Five of these students had to repeat one subtest with four needing to repeat two. For spring 2011, 27 of 36 passed the total test with 14 passing all subtests. Twelve of these students had to repeat one subtest with 11 needing to repeat two.

Semester	Number in Class	Total Scores		Subtest Scores			Number passing	Percent passing
		Low score Total Test	High score Total Test	Context Low/ High Score	Knowledge Low/ High Score	Practice Low/ High Score		
Fall 2008	11	66.43	86.01	61.76/88.24	57.75/88.73	71.43/92.86	8	73%
Spring 2009	41	63.64	88.11	55.88/94.12	52.11/91.55	69.05/92.86	35	85%
Fall 2009	15	66.43	86.71	52.94/85.29	70.42/92.96	69.05/90.48	9	60%
Spring 2010	34	67.13	88.81	61.76/94.11	62.50/90.27	69.04/95.23	27	79%
Fall 2010	14	67	87	56/94	66/89	69/90	9	64%
Spring 2011	36	61.54	87.41	55.88/97.06	56.34/91.56	71.43/95.24	27	75%

Comment [A17]: The social work program provides a history of assessment results (Element IV. B).

*The cut score for the comprehensive exam is 74

The comprehensive exam is given within the first month of the senior seminar (capstone) course. It is likely that the reason for the lower scores in the context subtest is that students take the core social work courses dealing with that content early in their course of study. The practice scores are higher which may be reflective of the fact that those courses focusing on practice were completed the semester before the comprehensive exam is taken; therefore, that content is "fresher". Practice, and knowledge, subtest scores may also be higher because students see them as more relevant and since they are currently applying them in their field placement, the content is more present in their thinking.

Historically, students have performed better on the comprehensive exam in the spring than the fall semester. Students graduate in cohorts that have interesting characteristics. For example, the fall semester would have more transfer students, late change of majors, and students who may need to repeat a course, thereby, lengthening their stay at the university.

Results on the new written comprehensive exam.

Fall 2011 a total of 19 students participated representing 100% of this senior cohort. Figure 1 indicates percentage of correct responses on the written exam. Figure 2 indicates the percentage of correct responses for Spring 2012 senior cohort, representing 100% of student (n=51) taking the exam. No cut score was determined this year for this exam. Table 1 (Fall 2011) and Table 3 (Spring 2012) provides descriptive statistics of each cohort.

Comment [A18]: This paragraph provides a clear interpretation of how activities in the program influenced the written exam assessment results. Interpreting assessment results in the context of the programs classes and activities corresponds to Element IV. C.

The item analysis indicated some concerns regarding 13 of the 60 items with no student getting the correct answer. While this may indicate that the items were too difficult, through a convenience sample focus group of students and our assessment committee review, this could have been a result of the questions format. These same questions resulted in similar responses from the Spring 2012 senior cohort supporting this assertion. This resulted in an exam evaluative pool of 47 of the 60 items.

CARS completed the analysis of student data. Student mean total exam score was 33.34 out of a possible 47 points. This corresponds to a mean total percent correct score of 70.94%, indicating that, on average, students are responding correctly to just over 70% the items on the exam. Based upon the mean total score standard deviation estimate, there is a fair amount of variability in student total scores, with student individual total scores typically falling between 3.56 points below or above the mean. Reliability information (Cronbach's coefficient alpha, α) for the exam by objective is reported within Table 2. This estimate of internal consistency ranges from 0 to 1 and indicates the degree to which exam total score is free from random error. That is, coefficient alpha estimates closer to 1, indicate a more precise estimate of student performance or, said another way, a lesser degree of random error present within student scores. In general, reliability estimates of .70 or above are considered to indicate that scale scores are interpretable and can be used for research or program evaluation purposes.

Table 1.
Fall 2011 Student Written Comprehensive Score Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean (SD)	Min	Max
Total Score	19	33.34 (3.56)	25	40
Percent Correct	19	70.94 (7.58)	53.19	85.11

An initial analysis of the Fall 2011 items reliability with the matched objective was completed by CARS.

Table 2.
Reliability estimates by objective

Objective	Items	Reliability
1	32	n/a
2	4, 29-33, 45-46	0.158
3	6-9, 45, 54-57	0.537
4	33, 35, 49-50, 56-57	0.395
5	5	n/a
6	10-15, 20-22, 24-28, 46, 54-57	-0.018
7	5, 6-9, 23, 48, 51	0.232
8	4, 16-18, 36-38, 58-60	-0.193
9	5, 34, 39-44, 47-48	0.429
10	1-3, 16-17, 19, 32, 34-35, 39-45, 47, 50-54	0.381

Figure 2.
Spring 2012 SOWK Written Comprehensive Exam Percent Correct by Student

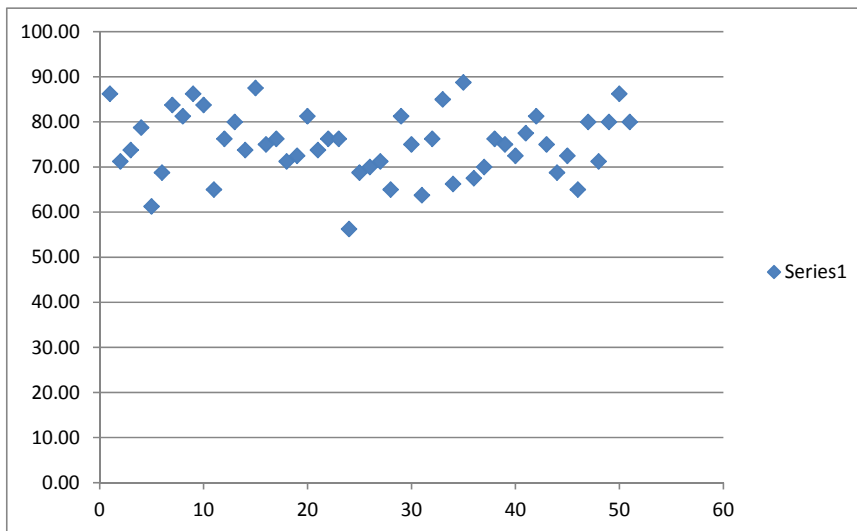


Table 3.
Spring 2012 Student Written Comprehensive Score Descriptive Statistics

Overall Summary					
	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Total Score	51	33.48	3.05	25	41
Percent Correct	51	55.80	5.09	42%	68%

Discussion

At the May 2012 faculty summit a review of the results occurred with two key decision
 a) analysis review of each question resulted in strengthening item responses were questions seemed too easy or unclear to students; and
 b) to change the format of items 10-15, 39-44, and 55 where no student in either senior cohort got correct.

These changes will be reviewed at the August 2012 summit for implementation in Fall 2012. A cut off score was discussed and tabled until the fall as the assessment committee continues to review the data. As we move to validate the written comprehensive exam we will lock this exam with plans for minor revisions over the next two years. The faculty will continue to work with CARS in development and validation of our new written comprehensive.

Comment [A19]: The program notes two specific improvements to the Assessment Process that shows careful consideration of the assessment. This corresponds to APT Element VI. B.

Oral Exam

Results for the 2008-2009, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 years follow.

All but one student passed the oral exam in each of the four semesters being reviewed with all passing in the final two semesters. (A, B, C, D represents student grade distribution on the oral exam)

	# in Class	Oral A	Oral B	Oral C	Oral D	Percent passing
Semester						
Fall 2008	11	2/18%	3/27%	5/46%	1/9%	90.9%
Spring 2009	41	5/12%	20/49%	15/37%	1/2%	97.5%
Fall 2009	15	1/7%	5/33%	8/53%	1/7%	93%
Spring 2010	34	9/26%	18/53%	6/18%	1/3%	97%
Fall 2010	13	1/8%	6/46%	6/46%	0/0	100%
Spring 2011	36	5/14%	20/55.5%	11/30.5%	0/0	100%
Fall 2011	19	3/15	7/36	7/36	2/10	89.4
Spring 2012	49	9/18	25/51	11/23	4/8	91.8

*The cut score for the oral exam is 74; one student withdrew prior to taking the oral exam in fall 2010

Oral exam scores are likely higher because students have spent the semester prior to taking the oral in the field practicum where they are utilizing language and theories. For the oral exam they are demonstrating their ability to apply what they learned at a time that they seem more comfortable with themselves professionally as well as with their knowledge and practice base.

Prior to fall 2010, over 90% of all our students passed the oral in the fall semester with a 97 % passing rate in the spring semester. In fall 2010 and spring 2011, 100% of the students passed. It will be interesting to determine if the changes made to the oral exam prior to the fall 2010 semester were responsible for increased number of students passing. Faculty speculated that the modifications made to the oral exam presented questions in a more logical sequence with an increased likelihood that students would be able to more easily follow the logical progression of content.

Comment [A20]: These two paragraphs include faculty interpretations of how activities in the program influenced the Oral Exam assessment results (Element IV. C). Strong interpretations of the results can help identify strengths and weaknesses of the program curriculum and activities.

Field Practicum Evaluation Instrument Each social work major completes a field practicum generally during his/her last semester that consists of a minimum of 472 of supervised practice in an agency setting. Mid-way through the field practicum the student evaluates herself and is evaluated by the agency field supervisor. The student and supervisor review the evaluation together at which time the student's educational needs for the remainder of the field experience are addressed. At the conclusion of the practicum a similar evaluation process occurs. These evaluations address the student's ability to integrate knowledge and skill and demonstrate this ability in a practice setting.

Student Motivation Scale The student motivation scale was developed by the assessment officer and given to students completing outcome assessment in social work at the conclusion of each semester since the spring 1996 semester. This scale is designed to demonstrate the level of motivation of students completing the outcome assessment measures, specifically the comprehensive and oral exams in the social work major. Results have consistently indicated that social work majors take their participation in the assessment activities seriously and are motivated to perform well. According to the assessment officer, these are some of the highest reported motivation levels reported at JMU.

V. Dissemination

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The results included in this APT are shared with all full-time social work faculty at the end-of-year and beginning-of-year summit. At this time, the assessment coordinator highlights the strengths and weaknesses and elicits from the faculty additional details that would facilitate

Comment [A21]: Program clearly documents that the assessment results are shared with *all* social work faculty members. This corresponds to Element V.

interpretation. Base on the interpretation of the results, faculty identify the actions that will be taken in the upcoming year to improve the program and the assessment process.

The impact of changes made from one year to the next are discussed, as needed, during the year in the social work program meetings which also includes student representation. The assessment process and its outcomes are shared with the program advisory board which includes student representation. Longitude results are shared with the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education and the University in self-study reports for reaffirmation and Academic Program Review.

Comment [A22]: The social program shares the assessment results and impact of changes with not only faculty, but also stakeholders as referenced in this section. This is an excellent assessment practice and meets the exemplary criterion for Element V.

VI. Uses of evaluation/Assessment Results and Actions Taken

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Assessment has proven especially beneficial this past year by helping:

- serve as a data source for revisions made to Program-Driven Assignment (PDA's)
- achieve greater clarity and consensus among faculty in the area of program and educational objectives/competencies
- ensure that assessment methods are tied to program and educational objectives/competencies in a systematic, reliable manner
- determine when our curriculum design is in line with our assessment measures
- provide diagnostic information for advisement of graduating seniors concerning their strengths and weaknesses

Comment [A23]: The following sections address APT elements VI. A and VI. B regarding program changes based on assessment. This program lists many specific program and assessment changes, many of which clearly relate back to the assessment results. The program could benefit from including slightly more detail regarding how the assessment results specifically informed these changes in their report.

A primary goal of assessment is to identify strengths and areas of improvement to make data-informed changes to programs that improve student learning.

The curriculum is reviewed annually with modifications and changes in courses being made as appropriate. Content areas identified through the assessment process as needing strengthening are reviewed across the curriculum to address the sequential nature of the content. The most recent uses of assessment data include:

1. Continuing work with CARS on:
 - a. Moving the written comprehensive social work exam from a norm referenced to criterion referenced outcome assessment measure. This work will continue during 2012-2013. As this process continues following are items for consideration from discussion with Dr. Donna Sundre, CARS.
 - o Review comprehensive written exam items.
 - o Assure that our graduates are workforce ready and are meeting minimum standards for beginning practice.
 - o Assure that all Educational Objectives/Competencies are evaluated.
 - b. Developing benchmarks for expected student performance for comprehensive written exam and the oral exam

- c. Review and adjust Social Work Information Literacy Test at fall 2012 faculty summit

Additional items for consideration:

- Assess practice behavior in relation to competency on the field practicum evaluation; use of other field assignments as outcome measures
 - Test each competency at least two times [could measure L the S then A]
 - Ensure multi measures for each competency
 - Collect information on number of students applying to graduate school [number accepted for advanced standing]
 - Define the use of the word “engage” in each area of the Educational Objectives/Competences and include in parenthesis an appropriate word for those not versed in social work language [engage is the word frequently used by the accrediting body in the Competencies that must be met by programs seeking accreditation]
 - Review faculty generated rubrics to evaluate written assignments and professional documentation assignments across the curriculum
 - Possible formative measures [portfolios, midterms exams, quizzes, papers, projects, oral presentations, internships]
 - Possible additional summative measures [course exit assessments, final exams]
2. Further develop the Assessment Committee which was formed in 2010-2011.
 3. Faculty assessed the areas where there seemed to be difficulty on the part of a significant number of students and reviewed the way in which the materials in those particular areas is handled in the classroom, in the texts, and/or supplemental materials. They also sought to strengthen the sequential nature of the curriculum. The Program-Driven Assignments (PDA's) were reviewed by faculty in the May 2010 retreat/summit in light of the revised educational objectives/competencies. Following are the revisions for 2010-2011:
 - Professional Documentation was added to each core social work course as a specified PDA. Each course will have specified professional writing that will occur in the context of that course. This is an effort to focus more on this area/competency and allow faculty to build on what the student has already completed as she/he moves through the curriculum.
 - SOWK 287 – moved multi-cultural competency workshop (IIHHS) from SOWK 466 to reinforce the importance of the cultural diversity as an early building block in the curriculum.
 - SOWK 288 – social justice human rights activity added to strengthen the students understanding of the implications of difference and diversity and the impact on a person's life experiences
 - SOWK 305 – focus more on evaluation of practice and becoming effective consumers of research
 - SOWK 317 – change the textbook to have a more generalist practice approach

- SOWK 465 – remove the family assessment paper and institute a referral report for a family, an assignment more appropriate to the work of beginning professional social workers
 - SOWK 466 - restructuring of Micro Learning Case Study to occur prior to fall 2010 to include assignments more appropriate to the skills/competencies that undergraduate students need to develop
 - SOWK 467 – revise the Macro Learning Case Study to a Macro Term Project more in keeping with the skills/competencies that undergraduate students need to develop
 - Removal of the textbook, *Just Practice: A Social Justice Approach to Social Work*, from all core social work courses as it is not accomplishing the goal of incorporating and strengthening social justice content across the curriculum. Other mechanisms to accomplish this goal will be explored.
 - Addition of the Admission to the Social Work Program Application and the Field Practicum Application as PDA's with the focus on professional documentation – application, resume, and personal statement.
4. Other activities of the faculty related to assessment as regards the revised Educational Objectives/Competencies during 2010-2011:
- Change from Educational Objectives to Educational Objective/Competency in order to eliminate any confusion that they are one and the same
 - The table illustrating the linkage between the core social work courses and the educational objectives/competencies was revised as appropriate (See *Attachment 1*)
 - The match of the educational objectives/competencies with course objectives and course learning objectives was reviewed and revised as appropriate (See *Attachment 2*)
 - Program-Driven Instructional Methods by Course table was modified as appropriate (See *Attachment 4*).

Additionally, the field director is working on strengthening the alignment of the current field practicum evaluation form with the educational objectives/competencies. She has requested assistance from CARS, an important new initiative, in the move to effectively assess the competence of our graduates and their readiness for beginning professional practice.

VII. List of accomplishments (Optional)

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The Social Work Program was the first recipient of the Provost Award for Excellence in Assessment. The program was also awarded a 2011 CHEA Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes.

Comment [A24]: Quality assessment practice can lead to external recognition within and outside of JMU. This program has been awarded both an internal award and a National award for their excellence in assessment practice.