| The University of Southern Mississippi |
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| **Detailed Assessment Report**<br>**2010-2011 Social Work BSW\*** |
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## Mission/Purpose

The mission of the School of Social Work is to prepare students for competent professional generalist social work practice at the baccalaureate level, consistent with the values of the profession and with the missions and goals of The University of Southern Mississippi and the College of Health. In addition, the School seeks to advance the social work profession, provide support to the human service community, and generate and transmit knowledge relevant to professional practice - with special attention to local, state and regional social welfare needs and circumstances, and awareness of broader national and global contexts. The School seeks to form a confident professional identity. It challenges its students to apply critical thinking, assimilate the theoretical and practical foundations of the field, embrace human diversity and promote optimal human development across the lifespan, provide effective service, confront injustice and strives to produce graduates who are creative in applying the generalist perspectives, who build capacity in all spheres of functioning, and who promote progressive change to enrich the general welfare.

## Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Achievement Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

### O 1: Apply critical thinking skills

Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.

#### Documents:
- *SWK BSW Field Instructor's Evaluation of Student*
- *SWK_BSW Exit Survey Instrument*

#### Related Measures:

##### M 1: Field Evaluation - Apply Critical Thinking Skills

Students will be ranked as "meets expectations" at Objective I (apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice) on the Field Evaluation Instrument, at the completion of the field practicum, as assessed by their Field Instructors. The Field Instructors are licensed social work practitioners with at least two years direct practice experience and have received training through the School to provide supervision of students in placement. The evaluation is used by faculty in the assessment of students` overall academic performance. The evaluation instrument contains a rubric that includes a justification of ranking student performance for "below expectations" and "meets expectations."

Source of Evidence: Field work, internship, or teaching evaluation

###### Achievement Target:
90% of students will be ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective I.

###### Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (11/11) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective I. b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Not yet enrolled in field). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (14/14) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective I. b) Gulf Coast: 100% of students (12/12) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective I.

**M 2: Exit Survey - Apply Critical Thinking Skills**
Students will rate Item #19 of the Exit Survey (Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice ) as "Good" or "Excellent." The Exit Survey is distributed to all graduating students at the end of each spring and fall semester. The rating scale is from 1 to 5, poor to excellent

Source of Evidence: Exit interviews with grads/program completers

**Achievement Target:**
75% of respondents will rate Item #19 as "Good" or "Excellent."

**Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met**
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of respondents (11/11) rated Item #19 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Data were not collected because students were not enrolled in field seminar. Exit surveys are collected when students are enrolled in field seminar and in this case it would be spring 2011) . Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 86% of respondents (12/14) rated Item #19 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: 92% of respondents (11/12) rated Item #19 as "Good" or "Excellent."

**O 2: Practice ethical standards and principles**
Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.

**Related Measures:**

**M 3: Field Evaluation - Ethics**
Students will be ranked as "meets expectations" at Objective II (understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly. on the Field Evaluation Instrument, at the completion of the field practicum, as assessed by their Field Instructors. The Field Instructors are licensed social work practitioners with at least two years direct practice experience and have received training through the School to provide supervision of students in placement. The evaluation is used by faculty in the assessment of students` overall academic performance. The evaluation instrument contains a rubric that includes a justification of ranking student performance for "below expectations" and "meets expectations."

Source of Evidence: Field work, internship, or teaching evaluation

**Achievement Target:**
90% of students will be ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective II.

**Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met**
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (11/11) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective II. b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Not yet enrolled in field). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (14/14) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective II. b) Gulf Coast: 100% of students (12/12) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective II.

**M 4: Exit Survey - Ethics**
Students will rate Item #20 of the Exit Survey (understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards) as "Good" or "Excellent." The Exit Survey is distributed to all graduating

students at the end of each spring and fall semester. The rating scale is from 1 to 5, poor to excellent.

Source of Evidence: Exit interviews with grads/program completers

### Achievement Target:
75% of respondents will rate Item #20 as "Good" or "Excellent."

### Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 91% of respondents (10/11) rated Item #20 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Data were not collected because students were not enrolled in field seminar. Exit surveys are collected when students are enrolled in field seminar and in this case it would be spring 2011) . Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 79% of respondents (11/14) rated Item #20 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: 100% of respondents (12/12) rated Item #20 as "Good" or "Excellent."

## O 3: Apply knowledge and skills to social work practice
Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.

### Related Measures:

## M 5: Field Evaluation - Apply Knowledge and Skills
Students will be ranked as "meets expectations" at Objective VI (apply the knowledge and of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes) on the Field Evaluation Instrument, at the completion of the field practicum, as assessed by their Field Instructors. The Field Instructors are licensed social work practitioners with at least two years direct practice experience and have received training through the School to provide supervision of students in placement. The evaluation is used by faculty in the assessment of students` overall academic performance. The evaluation instrument contains a rubric that includes a justification of ranking student performance for "below expectations" and "meets expectations."

Source of Evidence: Field work, internship, or teaching evaluation

### Achievement Target:
90% of students will be ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VI.

### Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (11/11) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VI. b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Not yet enrolled in field). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (13/13) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VI. b) Gulf Coast: 100% of students (11/11) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VI.

## M 6: Exit Survey - Apply Knowledge and Skills
Students will rate Item #24 of the Exit Survey (apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes) as "Good" or "Excellent." The Exit Survey is distributed to all graduating students at the end of each spring and fall semester. The rating scale is from 1 to 5, poor to excellent.

Source of Evidence: Exit interviews with grads/program completers

**Achievement Target:**
75% of respondents will rate Item #24 as "Good" or "Excellent."

**Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met**
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 91% of respondents (10/11) rated Item #24 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Data were not collected because students were not enrolled in field seminar. Exit surveys are collected when students are enrolled in field seminar and in this case it would be spring 2011). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 86% of respondents (12/14) rated Item #24 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: 100% of respondents (12/12) rated Item #24 as "Good" or "Excellent."

## O 4: Understand individual development and behavior
Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.

**Related Measures:**

### M 7: Field Evaluation - Development and Behavior
Students will be ranked as "meets expectations" at Objective VII (use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.) on the Field Evaluation Instrument, at the completion of the field practicum, as assessed by their Field Instructors. The Field Instructors are licensed social work practitioners with at least two years direct practice experience and have received training through the School to provide supervision of students in placement. The evaluation is used by faculty in the assessment of students` overall academic performance. The evaluation instrument contains a rubric that includes a justification of ranking student performance for "below expectations" and "meets expectations."

Source of Evidence: Field work, internship, or teaching evaluation

**Achievement Target:**
90% of students will be ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VII.

**Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met**
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (11/11) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VII. b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Not yet enrolled in field). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (14/14) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VII. b) Gulf Coast: 100% of students (12/12) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VII.

### M 8: Exit Survey - Development and Behavior
Students will rate Item #25 of the Exit Survey (use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities) as "Good" or "Excellent." The Exit Survey is distributed to all graduating students at the end of each spring and fall semester. The rating scale is from 1 to 5, poor to excellent.

Source of Evidence: Exit interviews with grads/program completers

**Achievement Target:**
75% of respondents will rate Item #25 as "Good" or "Excellent."

### Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 55% of respondents (6/11) rated Item #25 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Data were not collected because students were not enrolled in field seminar. Exit surveys are collected when students are enrolled in field seminar and in this case it would be spring 2011). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 93% of respondents (13/14) rated Item #25 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: 92% of respondents (11/12) rated Item #25 as "Good" or "Excellent."

### Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):
For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

### Faculty Discussion - Human Behavior 2010-2011
*Established in Cycle:* 2010-2011
For 2011-2012, increasing students' ability to connect between theories of human development and social work practice will be ...

## O 5: Analyze social policies
Analyze, formulate, and influence social policies.

### Related Measures:

### M 9: Field Evaluation - Social Policies
Students will be ranked as "meets expectations" at Objective VIII (analyze, formulate, and influence social policies) on the Field Evaluation Instrument, at the completion of the field practicum, as assessed by their Field Instructors. The Field Instructors are licensed social work practitioners with at least two years direct practice experience and have received training through the School to provide supervision of students in placement. The evaluation is used by faculty in the assessment of students` overall academic performance. The evaluation instrument contains a rubric that includes a justification of ranking student performance for "below expectations" and "meets expectations."

Source of Evidence: Field work, internship, or teaching evaluation

**Achievement Target:**
90% of students will be ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VIII.

### Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (11/11) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VIII. b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Not yet enrolled in field). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (14/14) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VIII. b) Gulf Coast: 100% of students (12/12) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective VIII.

### M 10: Exit Survey - Social Policies
Students will rate Item #26 of the Exit Survey (analyze, formulate, and influence social policies)) as "Good" or "Excellent." The Exit Survey is distributed to all graduating students at the end of each spring and fall semester. The rating scale is from 1 to 5, poor to excellent.

Source of Evidence: Exit interviews with grads/program completers

### Achievement Target:
75% of respondents will rate Item #26 as "Good" or "Excellent."

### Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 64% of respondents (7/11) rated Item #26 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Data were not collected because students were not enrolled in field seminar. Exit surveys are collected when students are enrolled in field seminar and in this case it would be spring 2011). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 86% of respondents (12/14) rated Item #26 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: 67% of respondents (8/12) rated Item #26 as "Good" or "Excellent."

### Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):
For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

### Faculty Discussion - Social Policy 2010-2011
*Established in Cycle:* 2010-2011
For 2011-2012, efforts to increase students' interests in social policy will include developing opportunities for leadership a...

## O 6: Evaluate and apply research studies
Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.

### Related Measures:

### M 11: Field Evaluation - Research
Students will be ranked as "meets expectations" at Objective IX (evaluate research studies, apply research finding to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions) on the Field Evaluation Instrument, at the completion of the field practicum, as assessed by their Field Instructors. The Field Instructors are licensed social work practitioners with at least two years direct practice experience and have received training through the School to provide supervision of students in placement. The evaluation is used by faculty in the assessment of students` overall academic performance. The evaluation instrument contains a rubric that includes a justification of ranking student performance for "below expectations" and "meets expectations."

Source of Evidence: Field work, internship, or teaching evaluation

### Achievement Target:
90% of students will be ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective IX.

### Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (11/11) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective IX. b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Not yet enrolled in field). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 100% of students (11/11) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective IX. b) Gulf Coast: 100% of students (8/8) were ranked as "meet expectations" at Objective IX.

### M 12: Exit Survey - Research

Students will rate Item #27 of the Exit Survey (evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluation of practice interventions) as "Good" or "Excellent." The Exit Survey is distributed to all graduating students at the end of each spring and fall semester. The rating scale is from 1 to 5, poor to excellent.

Source of Evidence: Exit interviews with grads/program completers

### Achievement Target:
75% of respondents will rate Item #27 as "Good" or "Excellent."

### Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met
Fall, 2010: a) Hattiesburg: 64% of respondents (7/11) rated Item #27 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: Not Applicable (Data were not collected because students were not enrolled in field seminar. Exit surveys are collected when students are enrolled in field seminar and in this case it would be spring 2011). Spring, 2011: a) Hattiesburg: 79% of respondents (11/14) rated Item #27 as "Good" or "Excellent." b) Gulf Coast: 92% of respondents (11/12) rated Item #27 as "Good" or "Excellent."

### Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):
For full information, see the *Action Plan Details* section of this report.

### Faculty Discussion - Research 2010-2011
*Established in Cycle:* 2010-2011
For 2011-2012, efforts to increase students' interests in research will involve 1) teaching research methods through the framework...

## Action Plan Details for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)

### Faculty Discussion - Research 2008-2009
Faculty noted that research is generally of less interest to students than practice courses, and thus their perceptions of ability to complete or evaluate research is generally low. Nonetheless, efforts to increase students` interests in research involve 1) encouraging students to attend faculty presentations regarding their research and 2) faculty increase relevance of research findings in practice classes.

**Established in Cycle:** 2008-2009
**Implementation Status:** In-Progress
**Priority:** Medium
**Implementation Description:** Beginning of academic year, Aug. 2009
**Responsible Person/Group:** Faculty

### Faculty Discussion - Social Policy 2009-2010
Faculty noted that social policy is generally of less interest to students than practice courses, and thus their perceptions of ability to influence social policy is generally low. Nonetheless, efforts to increase students` interests in social policy involve developing opportunities for leadership and advocacy through curriculum and application of theories through community engagement.

**Established in Cycle:** 2009-2010
**Implementation Status:** In-Progress
**Priority:** Medium

**Completion Date:** 05/14/2011

## Faculty Discussion-Research 2009-2010

Faculty noted that research is generally of less interest to students than practice courses, and thus their perceptions of ability to complete or evaluate research is generally low. Increasing student interest and participation in social work research will be accomplished through the use of three pedagogical strategies: 1) Teach research methods through the framework of evidence-based practice; 2) improve students' information literacy skills; and 3) strengthen students' abilities to apply the research discussed in literature to the presenting problem of their client. Additionally, efforts to increase students` interests in research involve encouraging students to engage in research (their own or collaborative with faculty) and present findings of the research at conferences and encourage faculty to increase relevance of research findings in practice classes.

**Established in Cycle:**  2009-2010
**Implementation Status:**  In-Progress
**Priority:**  High

**Completion Date:**  05/14/2011

## Faculty Discussion - Human Behavior 2010-2011

For 2011-2012, increasing students' ability to connect between theories of human development and social work practice will be accomplished through application of theories (e.g., biopsychosocial assessment utilizing case scenarios). For example, Case Assessment Assignments will be given to students. These assignments include: 1) Students choose two theories from various theories discussed in class (e.g., developmental theories, systems theories) to understand the person and his/her problems described and identified in the case. 2) Students discuss the main assumptions and key constructs of the theories. 3) Students discuss strengths and weaknesses of the theories in forming an understanding of the problems involved. 4) Students search for and evaluates two empirical studies that employ the theories in analyzing and explaining the particular problem.

**Established in Cycle:**  2010-2011
**Implementation Status:**  Planned
**Priority:**  Medium

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**
**Measure:** Exit Survey - Development and Behavior  | **Outcome/Objective:** Understand individual development and behavior

**Completion Date:**  05/31/2012

## Faculty Discussion - Research 2010-2011

For 2011-2012, efforts to increase students' interests in research will involve 1) teaching research methods through the framework of evidence-based practice; 2) improving students' information literacy skills; and 3) strengthening students' abilities to apply the research discussed in literature to the presenting problem of their client; 4) encouraging students to engage in research (their own or collaborative with faculty) and present findings of the research at conferences.

**Established in Cycle:**  2010-2011
**Implementation Status:**  Planned
**Priority:**  Medium

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**
    **Measure:** Exit Survey - Research  | **Outcome/Objective:** Evaluate and apply research studies

## Faculty Discussion - Social Policy 2010-2011

For 2011-2012, efforts to increase students' interests in social policy will include developing opportunities for leadership and advocacy by extending classroom knowledge into community projects that require student leadership and engagement (e.g., policy analysis assignments). Policy Analysis Assignments will be given to students. These assignments include: 1) Students identify an area of practice of interest to them (child welfare, juvenile justice, community-health, mental health, etc). 2) Students create a social history for a hypothetical client in this practice area. 3) Students identify the primary problem for which the client has been referred to them. 4) Students identify a specific policy at the Mississippi state level that impacts how they work with this client. 5) Students complete a written analysis of this policy using the Policy Analysis Framework developed in the course text.

**Established in Cycle:**  2010-2011
**Implementation Status:**  Planned
**Priority:**  Medium

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**
    **Measure:** Exit Survey - Social Policies  | **Outcome/Objective:** Analyze social policies

**Completion Date:**  05/31/2012

## Analysis Answers

### What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?

Overall, the social work program met the majority of its targeted outcomes. The exit survey was administered at the point of graduation and the results showed that all students believed they were well prepared with regard to the application of: critical thinking skills; values and ethics; and knowledge and skills. The students' self-perceptions indicated they were less confident about mastering content related to human development, policy and research. On the other hand, the perceptions of field instructors were more positive about students' preparation for field placement. Field instructors believed that students successfully met all learning objectives including human development, policy and research. Our goal for the coming years is to 1) increase the perceptions of students about their mastery of human development, policy and research content and 2) provide additional opportunities for students to apply theories of human development, polices and research skills in both academic settings and field agencies.

### What specifically did your assessments show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?

The three outcomes that will continue to require attention are the content areas of human development, social policy and research. Human development: For 2011-2012, increasing students' ability to connect between theories of human development and social work practice will be accomplished through application of theories (e.g., biopsychosocial assessment utilizing case scenarios). For example, Case Assessment Assignments will be given to students. These assignments include: 1) Students choose two theories from various theories discussed in class (e.g., developmental theories, systems theories) to understand the person and his/her problems described and identified in the case. 2) Students discuss the main assumptions and key constructs of the theories. 3) Students

discuss strengths and weaknesses of the theories in forming an understanding of the problems involved. 4) Students search for and evaluate two empirical studies that employ the theories in analyzing and explaining the particular problem. Policy: For 2011- 2012, efforts to increase students' interests in policy will include developing opportunities for leadership and advocacy by extending classroom knowledge into community projects that require student leadership and engagement (e.g., policy analysis assignments). Policy Analysis Assignments will be given to students. These assignments include: 1) Students identify an area of practice of interest to them (child welfare, juvenile justice, community-health, mental health, etc). 2) Students create a social history for a hypothetical client in this practice area. 3) Students identify the primary problem for which the client has been referred to them. 4) Students identify a specific policy at the Mississippi state level that impacts how they work with this client. 5) Students complete a written analysis of this policy using the Policy Analysis Framework developed in the course text. Research: For 2011-2012, efforts to increase students' interests in research will involve 1) teaching research methods through the framework of evidence-based practice; 2) improving students' information literacy skills; and 3) strengthening students' abilities to apply the research discussed in literature to the presenting problem of their client; 4) encouraging students to engage in research (their own or collaborative with faculty) and present findings of the research at conferences

## Annual Reports

### Program Summary

Executive Summary: The 2010-2011 year was very productive for the school of social work. Faculty generated record dollars of external funds ($1.7 M). A total of 16,856 internship hours and 35,339 internship hours were generated by BSW students and MSW students respectively. The school has had continued influence in strengthening human service organizations (MDHS) through training an increasing number of professional social workers. Child Welfare education, which is an initiative designed specifically to get MDHS workers to matriculate in social work, has resulted in contracts for this year of about $1.25 M. As a result of successfully recruitment efforts and the partnership with the MDHS the School's enrollment has increased by 15% bringing additional student credit hours to the university. The faculty has contributed significantly in their university service through participation in shared governance activities. Dr. Forster, the former director for the school of social work, serves as the Dean in the College of Health. Dr. Rehner, the director for the school of social work, served as the president of the Faculty Senate and co-chaired the Academic Priorities in the University of Priorities Committee. He also directed the Caribbean studies program. Dr. Kolbo serves as a member of the College Advisory Committee, Faculty Handbook Committee, and Federal Grant Proposal Review Committee. Dr. Osowski serves as member of the Gulf Coast Faculty Staff Council, Graduate Council, and Southern Miss Internationalization Council. Dr. Lee serves as member of the University Assessment Committee. Teaching Activities: Successful strategy for integrating curriculum into practice skills has been sending staff from field office to do regular professional and clinical supervision in county agencies. Students and county staff have responded very favorably to these visits. Research and Scholarly Activities: The faculty has been productive with 23 presentations and 19 publications in refereed journal, as technical reports, or as book chapters. Approximate $1.7 million dollars of external funds were generated by faculty over the course of the year. The School of Social Work's Training Academy continues to strengthen child welfare services to children in Forrest and Harrison Counties. The impact of these services on children and MDHS and Youth Court has been substantial. Public/Community Service: The School of Social Work's Family Network Partnership continued to strengthen the University's linkages to the community. A total of 9,707 service hours were generated by students and staff to the community. The school sponsored 2 regional conferences (the annual fall colloquium and a conference on aging) with each being attended by 200+ local social workers. International Activities: The school of social work also contributed significantly to the success of international programs for the university through its participation and leadership in the Caribbean

studies program. Challenges: Challenges of this year involved developing additional infrastructure and organizational capacity to manage external funds and finding adequate funding to hire and pay both new tenure track faculty and adjunct instructors.

## Continuous Improvement Initiatives

Accreditation of the BSW program requires ongoing, continuous renewal as a part of the accreditation process defined by the Council on Social Work Education. To that end, the faculty began its review of the BSW curriculum in the Fall of 2009. Every month faculty met at least two times for an average of three hours at each meeting. The faculty redefined the vision and mission and identified student learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, values) relative to the new 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Additionally, faculty defined when specific knowledge, skills, and values should be introduced within the curriculum to maximize student learning. The plan of work is expected to change curriculum plans effective Spring 2012.

## Closing the Loop

Actions that have been completed in the previous cycle include pedagogical efforts to increase students' interests in social policy and research. Efforts to increase students' interests in policy included developing opportunities for leadership and advocacy through curriculum and application of theories through community engagement. Nevertheless, there was no significant difference between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 in students' perceptions of their preparation to analyze, formulate, and influence social policy. According to the 2009-2010 Exit Surveys, 71% to 86% of students (vary by site and semester) believed that they were well prepared in analyzing, formulating and influencing social policy. According to the 2010-2011 Exit Surveys, 64% to 86% of students believed that they were well prepared in analyzing, formulating and influencing social policy. For 2011-2012, Policy Analysis Assignments will be given to students. These assignments include: 1) Students identify an area of practice of interest to them (child welfare, juvenile justice, community-health, mental health, etc). 2) Students create a social history for a hypothetical client in this practice area. 3) Students identify the primary problem for which the client has been referred to them. 4) Students identify a specific policy at the Mississippi state level that impacts how they work with this client. 5) Students complete a written analysis of this policy using the Policy Analysis Framework developed in the course text. Research: Efforts to increase students' interests in research involved 1) teaching research methods through the framework of evidence-based practice; 2) improving students' information literacy skills; and 3) strengthening students' abilities to apply the research discussed in literature to the presenting problem of their client; 4) encouraging students to engage in research (their own or collaborative with faculty) and present findings of the research at conferences. Compared to the year of 2009-2010, an increased percentage of students felt that they were prepared well in evaluating and applying research studies (2009-2010 Exit Surveys: 29% to 86%; 2010-2011 Exit Surveys: 64% to 92%).