Example SLO from the Last Year's Report

113-008-MSW-SLO-04 POLICY

Students demonstrate competency in policy practice and policy-informed practice.
(This is a new outcome assessed first time in AY 2016-2017).

Step 2: Identify Methods & Measures

Assessment Approach: Both
Instrument(s) Used: Formal evaluation of practical skills (clinical, educational, professional),
Student self-assessment

Direct Measure

To assess graduating MSW students' competency in policy practice and policy-informed practice, the following four items of the CSE form are measured in MSW543.

1. Analyzes and advocates for policies that promote social wellbeing or individuals, families, groups and communities.
2. Collaborates with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.
3. Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the role of policy and its impact on the agency client base.
4. Identify trends among micro, mezzo and macro variables that affect advanced practice and provide leadership to respond to those trends in an effective and culturally competent ways.

Indirect Measure

The following five items of the student exit survey assess students' competency in policy practice and policy-informed practice.

1. I am confident in my ability to identify and analyze social policy at the local, state, or federal level that impacts the well-being of my clients, service delivery, or access to social services.
2. I am confident in my skills to assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.
3. I am confident in my ability to apply critical thinking to advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
4. I recognize that a multitude of historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, or global influences that can affect social policy.
5. I understand my role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and/or macro levels

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Step 3: Criteria for Success

Ratings of CSE range between 0 to 4. A score of 3 reflects competency ("Intern understands the concept and has consistently met the expectations in this area"). 85% of students earn average score of 3.0 or higher on the four indicators of policy practice and policy-informed practice are used as the benchmark.

Rating on the student exit survey questions range between 1 to 10. 85% of students earn average score of 8 or higher on the five exit survey questions on policy practice and policy-informed practice are used as the benchmark.

Step 4 (2016-2017): Data Collection and Analysis

In May 2017, 104 students graduated from the MSW program. Comprehensive Skills Evaluation (CSE) forms were completed for 102 graduates (98.1% response rate) by field supervisors at internship agencies in Spring, 2017. The response rate on CSE increased to 98.1 % from 93.6% in AY 2015-2016. Students' mean scores on the four CSE indicators of policy practice and policy-informed practice ranged from 0.0 to 4.0. 98% of the graduates scored 3.0 or higher on the mean score of the four CSE items and thus, the benchmark of 85% was successfully met. The mean CSE score on policy practice and policy-informed practice for all students was 3.40 (SD=0.56).

At the end of Spring, 2017, 94 students (90.4% response rate) completed the student exit survey. Mean scores on the five exit survey items assessing policy practice and policy-informed practice ranged from 3.2 to 10.0. 85.1% of the graduates scored 8.0 or higher on the mean score and thus the bench mark of 85% was successfully met. However, this percentage was the lowest percentage of student who met the criteria among all student learning outcomes assessed. 2.1% of the students scored lower than 6.0 and 12.8% of the students scored between 6 and 8. The mean policy practice score of the exit survey for all students was 9.0 (SD=1.2).

Step 4 (2016-2017): Summary: Assessed and Met

Step 5 (2016-2017): Improvement Actions

While the bench mark of 85% was successfully met for both direct and indirect measures. In the outcome from the student exit survey, the percentage of students earned average score of 8 or higher was 85.1% and just met the benchmark of 85%. This percentage was the lowest percentage of meeting the benchmark among all student learning outcomes assessed this year. By analyzing the data closely, it was found that 2.1% of the students scored lower than 6.0 and 12.8% of the students scored between 6 and 8. In particular, exit survey item #1 ("I am confident in my ability to identify and analyze social policy at the local, state, or federal level that impacts the wellbeing of my clients, service delivery, or access to social services") and item #2 (I am confident in my skills to assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services) were the items with highest percentage of students who scored lower than 8.

The outcome will be closely monitored and strategies to improve students' perceived competency in policy practice and policy-informed practice will be discussed with faculty members. In addition, the assessment committee in the department of social work will review the exit survey questions for this SLO.

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