

**College of Arts & Sciences**  
**Sociology & Social Work**  
**Five-Year Assessment & Evaluation Report: 2006-2007**  
**Outcomes Achieved**

5. Results of alumni surveys

Of the 76 students who graduated from the Bachelor of Social Work Program and responded to the latest Graduate Student Survey, 71 (93%) reported an overall professional preparedness of good or very good. Of the respondents, 9.2% (n=7) were pursuing or had completed a MA/MS degree reported good or very good preparedness; and 94.7% (n=18) of those pursuing the MSW reported good or very good preparedness. Of former students not pursuing graduate education (n=50), (92%) reported good or very good with regard to professional preparedness.

Overall, 55% (n = 33) of Sociology graduates reported as being "very satisfied" with the academic advisement received while a student in the department. Thirty-five percent (n = 21) reported being "satisfied", while approximately 8% (n = 5) were "dissatisfied" with academic advisement while a student in the department. For graduates who reported being "very satisfied" with academic advisement, more than 56% of those students have attended graduate school; however, students that were dissatisfied with departmental academic advisement were less likely to have attended graduate school (nearly 8%). Approximately 36% of these students who reported being "satisfied" also attended graduate school. Overall, there were a total of 11 graduates that have earned a master's degree. Of those graduates that reported earning at least a Master's degree, approximately 55% (n= 6) of these students reported being "very satisfied" and 46% (n=5) reported being "satisfied". Dissatisfied students did not earn a Master's degree.

Overall, 15 students earned a Master of Social Work degree. Of these graduates earning a MSW degree, 60% (n = 9) reported being "very satisfied" with the academic advisement received. However, 7% (n = 1) of the students earning an MSW reported being dissatisfied with academic advisement received as a student. Thirty-three percent of graduates with MSW degrees reported being "satisfied". Interestingly, there was a larger percentage of students that did NOT earn a MSW degree and of those students, more than half reported being "very satisfied" with academic advisement.

Overall, only 5 graduates have reported to earn a doctoral degree. Of this total, 40% reported being "very satisfied", 40% were satisfied and 20% were "dissatisfied" with the academic advisement received in the department.

The respondents of the Joint Master's of Social Work Program from class of 2005 reported 91% of graduates who responded being employed in the field of social work. Four respondents did not answer this question. Twenty-one of the respondents answered the question classifying the setting of their current social work position and three did not answer the question.

Salaries of graduates ranged from \$30,000 to over \$45,000 annually. Sixty-three percent reported that the salary they earn is what they expected to earn. Thirteen percent earn more than they expected to upon graduation. Thirteen percent earn less than they expected. Eight percent had no expectations regarding salary when they graduated. The vast majority of graduated from the Joint Masters of Social Work Program earned or exceeded the salary they expected to upon graduation.

Graduates from the program are employed in a wide variety of settings. The advanced generalist curriculum is designed to prepare students for numerous positions in the field of social work. The respondents from the class of 2005 work in the following self reported duties and settings.

Graduates were also surveyed regarding satisfaction with different aspects of their current position. Overall, the respondents reported being satisfied with their jobs, duties, colleagues, and supervisors. They reported a slightly lower level of satisfaction with income.

6. Continuing education and employment

	<b>Number of Graduates</b>	<b>Continuing Education</b>	<b>Private Sector</b>	<b>Public Sector</b>	<b>Seeking Employment</b>
<b>AY '04-'05</b>	98	29	17	52	0
<b>AY '05-'06</b>	81	22	24	35	0
<b>AY '06-'07</b>	92	25		7	60

7. Results of employer surveys (if available)

N/A

8. Evaluation of student experiences

To assess satisfaction with the graduates' overall educational experience, surveys were sent out with a Likert scale that ranged from one to five. Respondents were combined to include very satisfied and satisfied and very dissatisfied or prepared and dissatisfied or prepared. Eighty-eight percent of graduates reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their overall educational experience in the JMSW program. Eight percent reported a neutral satisfaction with their overall educational experience. Graduates were also queried to rate their overall preparation for advanced generalist practice. Ninety-six percent of graduates reported being very well prepared or well prepared for advanced generalist practice.

9. Discuss the analysis of retention trends in your department/program. What are the plans for change, if needed?

**Academic Major/Program (past 3 years)**

Based on the department's retention rates, it appears that freshmen year is significant to the retention of Sociology and Social Work students. Beginning in 1999, there has been a consistent decline in the percentage of students continuing on to their second year of study. This, however, negative percentage change may also be due to the fact that students do not achieve "sophomore" status because of insufficient number of credits. Thus, it is possible that the retention rate of students in the Department of Sociology and Social Work may not be accurately reflected in the table included earlier in this document.

Nevertheless, the department's retention committee (Dr. Glenna Barnes, Committee Chairperson) has developed a number of strategies and initiatives to address any retention and mentoring needs:

*Key Strategy 1: Monitor student achievement through enhanced advisement, tutorials and*

*mentoring activities.*

Activities

- Closely monitor grades and attendance of classes. Develop/use a database that daily track attendance. Contact student's advisor in writing when grades for individual classes are at a C level or below.
- Formulate action plans with students to maintain a B average. This should be done in conjunction with the student's advisor.
- Advisors meet with students at least twice a semester to monitor student progress and help students utilize appropriate resources to increase/maintain academic success.
- Faculty meets to discuss progress of all students in classes.

*Key Strategy 2: To provide information about available services to students enrolled in major program and courses.*

Activities

- Invite guest speakers/representatives to classes
- Have a room/lounge/mailboxes for students to gather/"hang-out" where information can be posted/received.
- Have information sharing days and provide food for students at these events.
- Have students "scavenger hunt" services on campus and offer incentive for the most information shared.

*Key Strategy 3: Highlight the accomplishments of students by providing opportunities for students to present undergraduate/graduate research and to share study abroad experiences.*

Activities

- Have a Research Day... student's present research resulting from class work or collaboration with professors. Make this a symposium and invite members of the Greensboro community. Tie this to a class of study for a graded assignment. Suggested classes—Sociology 100...all research classes.
- Introduce students to research early. Make it a major part of Sociology 100—this is one way to make a very large class intimate.

*Key Strategy 4: Provide counseling, orientation and information sessions to help students make informed decisions about career paths.*

Activities

- Develop a sense of community by hosting informal dinners on and off campus for students. These are great avenues for information sharing and getting to know students.
- Invite representatives from professional organizations to meet with students and give first hand knowledge of career options.
- Have discussions about careers as an integral class component.

After conducting informal focus groups with both Sociology and Social Work majors during the 2005-2006 academic year, it was found that academic advisement is key to retaining students. In an effort to address the challenges of academic advisement among faculty and students, questionnaires and in-depth focus groups will be conducted with faculty and students to assess their understanding and expectations of academic advisement within the department.

In the Fall of 2006, Sociology faculty completed an outline questionnaire concerning the departmental academic advisement system. Questionnaire items included: "My role as an advisor is to..." Response choices were: assist students with course selection, provide guidance on internship and/or career planning, assist students with personal problems/challenges, assist with course registration and getting into classes, assist with paperwork for graduation requirements,

provide information on graduate school, and other (please specify). In your opinion, whose responsibility is it to help students with registration and getting into courses? Response choices for this item were: designated departmental faculty advisor, departmental chairperson, and designated advisor at college level, designated advisor at university level, departmental administrative assistant, and other. Of the meetings you have had with advisees this year, approximately what proportion was initiated by students (rather than being initiated by you)? Responses choices were: almost all, approximately 75%, approximately 50%, approximately 25%, and other.

The last items on the questionnaire addressed changes, if warranted, to the departmental advisement system. One of these items asked "how might the department/retention committee facilitate any needed improvements in faculty advising? Response choices for this questionnaire item were: "having a clearer statement of faculty advising responsibilities, set out expectations to both students and faculty when students enter, send out reminders (re: class registration starts x), provide timely information on academic policies, and other". For the last questionnaire item, faculty responded to the open-ended question, "What changes, if any, would you like to see made to the department's advisement system?"

Findings of the advisement questionnaires, show that exactly 100% of all faculty believed that their role as an advisor is to assist students with course selection, 87.5% believed their role is to assist advisees with course registration and getting into classes, and 62.5% believed that their role is to provide guidance on internship and/or career planning and provide information on graduate school. Moreover, exactly half of the faculty reported that their role as an advisor is to assist students with personal problems and/or challenges.

Approximately, 78% of faculty reported that having a clearer statement of faculty advising responsibilities, setting out expectations to both students and faculty when students enter the department, and sending out reminders regarding class registration time, etc. "might facilitate any needed improvements in faculty advising" in hopes of keeping track of students. One faculty member suggested that the department "*have a method to inform students of their assigned advisor—and of the change each year based on their academic status (i.e., freshmen, sophomore, etc.)*." Another faculty member stated that the department should, "*help find a way to contact students and remind them that they need to go to their faculty advisor. As a faculty member, I don't always have a lot of time to do this, which I consider more of a clerical duty.*" And, lastly, another faculty stated, "*rethink advising... As much as possible use a "cohort" style... begin at freshman year with identified majors and see them throughout years at A & T unless major changes.* Other suggested changes by faculty included, *seeking more administrative assistance with contacting students regarding advisement, having a day set aside for advisement, and informing new faculty of the advisement process.*

Following the completion of student questionnaires and focus groups (to be conducted during Spring Semester 2007), both faculty and student data will be compiled and summarized in a report. This report will outline further, ways in which faculty might enhance the advisement system in the Department of Sociology and Social Work.