

Social Work
Sociology and Social Work
Assessment period: (2010-11)

Expanded Statement of Purpose or Program Mission Statement:

As stated in our program handbook and on the University website, at its core, the purpose of the social work program is to prepare competent social work professionals who are motivated to gracefully serve others as an expression of their faith. In the context of the intersection of the goals of the University and those of professional social work practice, this mission is further articulated:

The mission of the baccalaureate social work program is to develop competent professionals who are committed to serving others through acquisition and integration of the essential knowledge, skills, and values that form the foundation of generalist practice in the social work profession; who are motivated to promote social justice; and who understand that a Wesleyan perspective, a desire for continuous personal development, and respectful engagement in the community that empowers others are integral components of the means for relating to God through service.¹*

(*note to reader: generalist practice is a specific professional model. Please do not edit to say 'general'.)

Consistency in Mission: University, Program, and Profession

The baccalaureate social work program is invested in a purpose derived from the mission, values, and goals of the University; from social work education and social work practice; and from the expressed concerns of our constituents – the students and the community. There is natural accord among the University's mission, its investment in baccalaureate social work education, and the social work profession. Primary connections amongst these are found in the focused attention on the *acquisition of knowledge and skills, a commitment to service, and in promoting social justice*. The University helps students to realize their mental, physical, social, moral, and spiritual potential and to recognize that a commitment to serving

, Program handbook

others, fostering social justice, and realizing individual capacity are expressions of a faithful lifestyle. The mission of the program helps to implement the University's mission to prepare students for service and leadership in selected professions. The Wesleyan heritage of the University is further expressed in core values and educational objectives. PLNU core values include several elements that resonate with the values of the social work profession and the educational objectives social work education. The University holds core values such as the importance of a global perspective, honoring ethnic and cultural diversity, effective stewardship of resources, service that works to better the condition of humankind locally and globally, and development of students as whole persons² that are commensurate with the principles of effective social work practices and the purposes of social work education. The consistency of mission-fit between the program and the University has been articulated by students in the major. One student (Lindsay Harlin) created the following outline during her senior year:

Mission: *Teaching, Shaping, Sending*

To develop competent professionals who are committed to serving others through acquisition and integration of the essential knowledge, skills, and values that form the foundation of generalist practice in the social work profession; who are motivated to promote social justice; and who understand that a Wesleyan perspective, a desire for continuous personal development, and respectful engagement in the community that empowers others are integral components of the means for relating to God through service.

Goals

1. Prepare students for beginning generalist practice
2. Prepare students who are committed to service in the community
3. Promote social and economic justice
4. Prepare students for advancement in graduate education and continuing professional development

***Teaching* KNOWLEDGE**

- Critical thinking skills
- Application of generalist skills at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels
- History of profession as well as contemporary structures and issues
- Forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination
- Strategies of advocacy and social change
- Theoretical frameworks

***Shaping* PRACTICE**

- Core values of Social Work Profession
- Empowerment of others

² PLNU Catalog,2007-08, p. 3

- Cultural sensitivity
- Engagement without discrimination
- Broad communication skills
- Incorporation of Christian social work values and a Wesleyan perspective

***Sending* PROFESSIONALS**

- Functional in agency or community service to bring about change
- Appropriately using supervision and consultation
- Personally responsible for learning and development
- Evaluating and self improving
- Analyzing, formulating, and influencing social policies
- Prepared for graduate study
- Personally aware and employing a professional use of self

According the Council on Social Work Education, “the purposes of social work education are to prepare competent and effective professionals” and “enable students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession for competent practice.” In accord with this policy, the baccalaureate social work program at PLNU prepares graduates for entry-level generalist professional practice who are able to integrate the knowledge of the liberal arts foundation with specific training in social work practices and skills, principles, and values and ethics.

The core goals of the PLNU social work program flow from the mission. These goals are related to the development of competent professions; integration of faith and professional practice; service to the community that empowers others; and continuous personal development.

The four primary program goals are:

- A. To prepare students for beginning generalist professional practice by providing the basic knowledge, skills, and values and ethics that form a professional foundation for competent practice with diverse populations and systems of any size.
- B. To prepare students who are committed to service in the community in a manner that includes an understanding of the intersection of Christian / Wesleyan perspectives and social work practice.
- C. To develop entry-level practitioners who are motivated to promote social and economic justice; and who employ theory and cultural sensitivity to empower diverse populations and to understand the transactions between social and cultural environments.
- D. To foster student involvement in continuing professional development and preparation for successful advancement to graduate education in social work.