Accreditation Standard 7: Program Renewal

7.0 The program has ongoing exchanges with external constituencies that may include social work practitioners, social service recipients, advocacy groups, social service agencies, professional associations, regulatory agencies, the academic community, and the community at large.

A variety of professional activities and associations on the part of the social work faculty at Northwestern State University help to ensure that ties with the professional community are maintained and that avenues of renewal are kept current and vital. Although living in a rural community can have its disadvantages at times, it is an advantage for continuing contacts and the strengths of contacts in the community. For example, it is common for a field instructor to be an alumnus of the program, serve on the program Community Advisory Board, and serve on a community committee with a faculty member. Through the activities, which are discussed below, relevance of the social work curriculum for contemporary practice is assured.

Department of Social Work Community Advisory Board:

The Department of Social Work Community Advisory Board meets formally, on a quarterly basis, to discuss curriculum, results of outcome assessment measures, and the needs of the service population. This board is composed of the following professionals: Alexa Boyette, LCSW, retired faculty member; Gail Braudaway, LCSW, Natchitoches Mental Health Center; Denise Garland, President, Social Work Club Natchitoches Campus; Faye Green Sowell, BSW, Natchitoches Center for Addictive Disorders, Doris Kochinsky, LCSW, retired, former field instructor, Gwen Maddox, LCSW, Huey P. Long Memorial Hospital; Richard Rodgers, MA, former field instructor; James Wagley, LCSW, Sabine Parish School Board.

These professionals are free to call the department or any faculty member at any
They are usually present at the Field Instruction Luncheon and/or have field instruction students in their agencies. They may or may not be a designated field instructor.

**Field Instructors:**

The frequency of contact between the Director of Field Instruction and the field instructors provides an ongoing exchange, which serves as an avenue of renewal for the faculty and as a means of providing feedback on the program’s curriculum. Open communication between the field instructors and the department occurs and field instructors are encouraged to make recommendations for strengthening the program and curriculum. The Field Instruction Program demands that the department be in continuous contact with the social agencies and their personnel. Through agency visits, telephone calls, and the Field Instructors Luncheon, the social work practitioners provide information on the employability and effectiveness of our graduates.

At the beginning of the academic semester the Director of Field Instruction provides an orientation for new field instructors, either individually (when there is one new instructor) or in a group. Also, during an academic semester, the faculty field liaisons make at least one visit to the agency to meet with the student and field instructor. Field instructors are also invited to an “end of the semester” luncheon where some topic of interest to field instructors and students is discussed. Some recent topics have been: Louisiana Practice Act and Credentialing; NASW – benefits of membership; The Next Step: Work or Graduate School; Exemplary Student Research; NSU Social Work Program Updates.
**Attendance and Presentations at National Conferences:**

All of the faculty members in the NSU Social Work Program have regularly attended either or both the Annual Baccalaureate Social Work Education Conference sponsored by Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors Association and the Annual Program Meeting of the CSWE. Attendance at these conferences provides faculty members with the opportunity to stay current on issues and trends in social work. These conferences not only provide information about the broad issues in the social work field, but also provide ideas/information on programmatic issues and teaching social work content in a creative, engaging manner. In addition to attending conferences, faculty members have also presented at these conferences and served as monitors for sessions. Ms. Pierce-Cruise has also attended the National Rural Social Work Conference on a regular basis. Members of the faculty have made the following presentations at national conferences during the past five years:

**Barbara Pierce:**


Ruth Weinzettle:

Randy Haley:


Wade Tyler

2nd National Gerontological Social Work Conference, in conjunction with the Council on Social Work Education 50\textsuperscript{th} Annual Program Meeting, Anaheim, California, February 27-March 1, 2004. Paper Presentation: “Analyzing Multiple Perspectives of the Gero-Enriched Field Practicum.” with Kathleen Laske (lead author) and Randy Haley.
**Professional Organization Memberships and Participation:**

**National Association of Social Workers (NASW)**

The following faculty are members of NASW: Sepora Fisher, Claudia Triche, Tina Feldt, Randy Haley, Darron Garner, Barbara Pierce-Cruise, Wade Tyler, and Ruth Weinzettle. Dr. Weinzettle has held a statewide position in the past and Ms. Feldt currently is an officer. Faculty members encourage student participation in this organization. At the annual NASW – LA conference Dr. Weinzettle organizes a workshop entitled “Student Presentations”. In the student presentation workshop, bachelor and master level students make brief presentations on papers they have completed for school assignments. For the 2007 conference three faculty members served on the student paper selection committee. Ruth Weinzettle chaired the committee and Sepora Fisher and Wade Tyler served on the committee. This presentation calls for coordination efforts among the social work programs in the state. Faculty members regularly attend and make presentations at the annual NASW-LA conference. The following faculty presentations have been made at this conference during the past five years:

**Randy Haley:**

**Wade Tyler:**
Barbara Pierce:

Ruth Weinzelte:

National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Louisiana State Conference, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, March 2004: “Student Presentations”


National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Louisiana State Conference, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, March 2005: “Student Presentations”

National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Louisiana State Conference, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, March 2006: “Doctoral Education: So You Want to Earn Your Doctorate?”

National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Louisiana State Conference, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, March 2006: “Student Presentations”

Tina Feldt:


National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW):
Darron Garner is a member of the National Association of Black Social Workers.

This organization was formed in response to issues related to providing human services in the Black community, educating social workers for effective service in the Black
community, and providing opportunities for participation of Black social workers in the social welfare arena. The mission of the NABSW is stated as follows:

The National Association of Black Social Workers, Inc., comprised of people of African ancestry, is committed to enhancing the quality of life and empowering people of African ancestry through advocacy, human services delivery, and research.

The National Association of Black Social Workers, Inc. will work to create a world in which people of African ancestry will live free from racial domination, economic exploitation, and cultural oppression. In collaboration with national, international, and other appropriate groups, NABSW will continue to leverage its collective expertise to strategically develop capacity of people of African ancestry to sustain and flourish. NABSW’s vision is guided by the Principles of the Nguzo Saba, which are Unity, Self-determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, and Faith, and the Seven Cardinal Virtues of Ma’at, which are Right, Truth, Justice, Order, Reciprocity, Balance, and Harmony.

**Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners (LABSWE)**

The Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners is the licensing body for social workers in the state of Louisiana. Claudia Triche, Randy Haley, Wade Tyler, Ruth Weinzelte, Patricia Clark, Darron Garner, Sepora Fisher, and Tina Feldt are licensed at the Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) level. Barbara Pierce is licensed at the Graduate Social Worker (GSW) level. Brenda Falcon is currently licensed at the provisional GSW level. Tina Feldt, Randy Haley, Wade Tyler, Sepora Fisher and Ruth Weinzelte are Board Approved Clinical Supervisors (BACS) and are authorized to supervise Graduate Social Workers (GSW) toward LCSW licensure. Tina Feldt also serves as Vice Chairperson on this Board. Wade Tyler is currently serving on an auxiliary committee (composed of board members and non-members) charged with revising the ethical standards promulgated by the Louisiana Social Work Practice Act. As
licensed social workers, each faculty must obtain at least 20 hours per year of continuing education. At least ten of those hours must be clinical (practice related) in nature and involve information on the assessment and treatment interventions of client issues/problems. At least three clock hours every two years must be on social work ethics. This continuing education ensures that faculty stay current on practice issues in the field and gives opportunity for the faculty to incorporate this information into curriculum decisions and course presentation.

**Louisiana Council on Social Work Education (LCSWE)**

This organization is the Louisiana Council on Social Work Education. As head of the Department of Social Work, Claudia Triche represents the program at meetings of this group. This group has been less active in recent years, primarily meeting once per year at the annual NASW-LA conference and collaborating on issues (e.g. licensing) when needed.

**Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)**

This organization, the Association of Social Work Boards, among other responsibilities, develops the exams that are utilized for social work licensing in most states, and in some areas in Canada. For two years Ruth Weinzelte served as an item-writer for that organization, writing items for the bachelor’s level exam. Dr. Weinzelte was invited to serve on the 2006 exam committee, which met four times that year to approve and revise test items, to be utilized on the tests. Dr. Weinzelte’s appointment to the exam committee is renewable for three years and she is serving on that committee again in 2007. The training received in preparation for this position, continuing flow of
information from ASWB, meetings with social workers throughout the US and Canada and the continued research required into current literature provide other avenues for the program to remain current on social work topics.

**National Rural Social Work Caucus**

The National Rural Social Work Caucus is an organization of people who are interested in rural social work issues. Every year since 1975 the group has held an Annual National Institute on Social and Human Services in Rural Areas. Barbara Pierce is an active member of this organization.

**Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD) and Council on Social Work Education (CSWE):**

As indicated in item number three, faculty members attend the national conferences of these two organizations on a regular basis. Also, faculty members hold memberships in these two organizations throughout the year thus having available the resources of these two organizations. Many faculty members subscribe to the BPD listserve, which provides valuable information on current curricula issues.

In addition, Claudia Triche served as Associate Editor with the publication *BPD Update* from 2004 through 2006.

**Title IVE Child Welfare Grant:**

The Department of Social Work has a very close relationship with the State of Louisiana, Department of Social Services, Office of Community Services (OCS). As a recipient of Title IV-E Training Funds, the faculty meets with personnel from the OCS office a minimum of four times yearly. We offer four elective classes for students to pursue in Child Welfare. Our curriculum is infused with material about the needs of
children as a population at risk. Our service area assessment demonstrated tremendous
needs of children. We include content appropriate for generalist practice into our
courses.

**Volunteer Activities in the Social Service Community**

Faculty members in the program have been involved in notable volunteer
activities in the community. These interactions serve to keep faculty abreast of
community needs, services, issues, and outcomes. The interaction can also provide the
program with avenues for better meeting community needs. Please refer to Faculty Data
Forms (C1_2002), which describe all faculty activity for the past three years. What
follows is a description of a selection of these activities. Although not specified below, it
is notable that faculty were very involved in providing assistance in various ways in the
wake of the Disasters of Hurricane Katrina and Rita in 2005.

In 2005, Ruth Weinzettle served as allocations volunteer for United Way of
Central Louisiana. In this capacity, she met with agency representatives and other
community volunteers to make decisions about how agencies were functioning and to
determine the amounts of money to be allocated to each nonprofit agency in the families
and children group. This allowed for the opportunity to become even more familiar with
the social service agencies in the community and surrounding parishes. Training
involved a focus on community needs and effectiveness in meeting those needs. In
addition, Dr. Weinzettle serves as the NSU representative to the Area Youth Planning
Board of Rapides Parish – a board that addresses issues of juvenile justice. One specific
issue addressed has been the need for trained professionals in the court system. To
address this need the juvenile judge (in collaboration with Dr. Weinzettle and Dr. Tyler, the Director of Field Instruction) requested grant funds to offer stipends to NSU social work students who complete their internship within the FINS program at her court. She just recently learned that these grant funds were approved. The Area Youth Planning Board is also the recent recipient of a large Macarthur Foundation Grant. Dr. Weinzettle is serving, as a volunteer, on the assessment of outcomes team. Dr. Weinzettle also serves as a member of the Alexandria Civil Service Commission.

Dr. Tyler, the Director of Field Instruction, serves on several community boards. Two current ones are Family Counseling Agency, Inc. of Alexandria and the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Central Louisiana. Barbara Pierce serves on the Board of Directors and the Professional Advisory Committee of the Domestic and Violence Education Support Program (DOVES) of Natchitoches, the local family violence program and battered women’s shelter.

Other faculty members are also involved in the social service community. Sepora Fisher is an active community volunteer. Three of her current activities are: Leader Alzheimer’s support group at Heritage Manor Nursing Home; Steering Committee member of Natchitoches Parish Parent Summit; External Review Committee for the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts. Tina Feldt serves as a board member of the Mental Health Association. Dr. Randy Haley has served on the boards of DOVES and Friends for Life AIDS Resource Center. Darron Garner has also volunteered in the community with the following being some of his activities: Assistant Director, Summer Basketball League for At-Risk Youth (Southeast Houston Division); Board of Directors,
Fostering Stars Learning & Resource Center; Volunteer, Counseling for Hurricane Evacuees; Advisory Council, Harris County Area 1 Head Start. Dr. Willow Aureala has served on the board of Turning Points for Families and is also an active member of the National Organization for Women.

**Direct Social Work Practice and Consultation Involvement:**

Several of the faculty members continue in direct social work practice. Presently Tina Feldt, a half-time faculty member, is the director of counseling services for Centenary College. Claudia Triche owns her own private practice and is active with Employee Assistance and Readjustment Counseling for combat veterans. Randy Haley engages in private practice in Natchitoches and Leesville. Ruth Weinzettle is associated with Cenla Counseling Associates of Alexandria and provides private marital counseling to a small caseload of clients. Wade Tyler has just finished a two-year commitment supervising two GSW social workers toward state licensure (LCSW), and has just begun work with two others. Darron Garner’s current direct practice activities include providing psychotherapy and mental health consultation services to Juvenile Probation Courts 315th and 316th in Harris County, Houston, Texas. Sepora Fisher is also currently supervising a GSW social worker for licensure (LCSW).

**Student Involvement in the Community**

The Department of Social Work has some involvement with the client population through assignments for our students. Our students visit social agencies in the sophomore year; do volunteer work in the junior year and field instruction in the senior year. Our students come to the faculty with their experiences, thoughts and
feelings to process. Community activities that the Social Work Club has been involved with during the Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 semesters include manning the information/donation table at the DOVES Awareness program, donating local restaurant gift cards to Natchitoches Center for Addictive Disorders in recognition of their clients of the month for March and April, making several visits to local retirement centers to interact with senior residents, doing yard work with the residents of Cane River Children's Services then providing them a pizza supper, donating food to needy families at Thanksgiving, forming teams and raising money for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, participating in Peoples State Bank's Adopt an Angel Christmas project, and raising monies (via bake sales) to purchase and send Christmas gifts to our "Adopt a Troop" group in Iraq.

7.1 The program’s faculty engage in the development and dissemination of research, scholarship, or other creative activities relevant to the profession.

The social work faculty members do engage in scholarly activities that are relevant to the profession, and many have made scholarly presentations and had publications in the past five years. The primary focus of Northwestern State University is that of a teaching university rather than a research university, however, there are opportunities for grant applications for writing, research, faculty development, and instructional enhancement. Please refer to Faculty Data Forms (C_1 2002) for a complete listing of presentations and publications. As is noted in these forms, the social work faculty is engaged in scholarship, research, and creative activities. What follows is a listing of faculty writings, publications, and scholarly activities for the past five years.

Willow Aureala:


Darron Garner:

Randy Haley:


Haley, R. (2000). Once Forgotten: A World War II Marine’s Combat and POW Experiences, 1940-45. (on display @ the National POW Museum in Andersonville, GA and the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History @ Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge)


**Barbara Pierce:**


**Wade Tyler:**


Ruth Weinzettle:


Claudia Triche

Triche, C. M., Principal Investigator, State of Louisiana, Department of Social Services, Office of Community Services (OCS) awarded the Department of Social Work, Northwestern State University $556,042, for "Title IV-E Child Welfare Continuation Contract", 2005-08.

Triche, C. M., Principal Investigator, State of Louisiana, Department of Social Services, Office of Community Services (OCS) awarded the Department of Social Work, Northwestern State University $472,957, for "Title IV-E Child Welfare Continuation Contract", 2002-05.

7.2 The program seeks opportunities for innovation and provides leadership within the profession and the academic community.

Previous discussions in sections 7.0 and 7.1 affirm that the social work faculty members at Northwestern State University take advantage of the opportunities available to them to enhance program effectiveness and the faculty also assumes many leadership roles in academic, professional, and community organizations. Please refer to Faculty Data Forms (C_1, 2002) for a complete listing of all involvements. Although faculty members are involved in many ways with these organizations, following are some
examples of leadership in which faculty have recently engaged. Tina Feldt serves on the Louisiana Board of Social Work Examiners as Vice Chairman. Claudia Triche was associate editor of *BPD Update* from 2004 through 2006. Barbara Pierce serves on the National Rural Social Work Caucus. Wade Tyler is currently serving on an auxiliary committee (composed of LABSWE board members and non-members) charged with revising the ethical standards promulgated by the Louisiana Social Work Practice Act.

One major innovation that program faculty has engaged in is developing online sections of courses within the social work curriculum. Northwestern State University was selected by the Louisiana Board of Regents as a pilot university for the development of online education within the state of Louisiana. The university has specifically encouraged the Department of Social Work to develop online courses. Program faculty members have taken advantage of grant programs to develop online courses and obtain technological equipment. Dr. Randy Haley is the primary author and investigator for the following current grant: “NSU Social Work Electronic Bachelor’s Degree Program Intermediate Course Development Module” competitive grant awarded December 2006, $18500 from the Louisiana Board of Regents. Several faculty members are participating in this grant by developing online sections of courses.

During the spring semester of 2006, five social work faculty members—Patricia Clark, Wade Tyler, Barb Pierce, Sepora Fisher, and Claudia Triche--participated in Title III funded training in online instruction. The training emphasized course construction for online teaching, including writing learning outcomes and assignments which progress from rote learning to high levels of critical thinking. Faculty were presented with
methods of engaging online students and were required to evaluate these and to contribute more. Collaboration between faculty was encouraged so that experience could be shared. Classes were held to demonstrate the latest in technology. Faculty practiced using the technology during these classes and were then provided with the software and hardware required to use the technology on their own. Each faculty member involved in the training was required to develop a course for online instruction by the end of the training period. These courses were evaluated by the trainers at each level of development and course materials were revised until they met requirements. Courses developed during and as a result of this training incorporate the methods which have been found to have the best results for online learning.