Field Instruction Initiative

**Program-in-Brief**

# [December 10, 2012]

**Pilot Site / Name of Project:**

USC School of Social Work Field Instruction Initiative Group Supervision Model

**Problem Statement (What issue(s) is the project trying to address?):**

It was perceived that there is a lack of consistency in addressing the CALSWEC competencies field instruction provided to our CALSWEC students. 1. Field Instruction was only focused on case supervision; 2. DCFS field instructors are not given release time to supervisor students so the amount of time the FI can spend in field instructing the student is limited to 1 hour per week; 3. CALSWEC students stated they did not feel connected to the CALSWEC program through their MSW program experience; 4. CALSWEC students did not feel they did not have sufficient time to interact with other CALSWEC students in the program; 5. USC CALSWEC field faculty wanted to establish a stronger working relationship including providing additional support and better collaboration with CALSWEC field instructors (foundation/concentration year).

**Hypotheses/Operating Theory:**

* 1. We believe through the development of a group field instruction model and the development of curricula that incorporate both the EPAS standards and the CALSWEC competencies we could enhance the learning experience to help students better integrate theory and practice in child welfare. 2. These seminars will provide the students with an opportunity to interact in a small group setting with the same group members and instructors throughout the MSW program, creating a strong support network. 3. In working with CALSWEC field instructions in the development of the circular collaboration with and support to these field instructors will be enhanced. 3. Increased interactions with USC CALSWEC field faculty will strengthen connections with the students. 4. These seminars will provide opportunity for the students to integrate their practice in the field placement with the EPAS standards and CALSWEC competencies. 5. These seminars will allow students to learn and practice skills in a group supportive group setting; providing rich professional coaching opportunities. 6**.** It reinforces students’ commitment to the CALSWEC mission, and centralizes the importance of CALSWEC in the MSW program. 7. Student learning will be enhanced through the integration of community providers and consumers as guest lecturers in the classroom. 8. The use of multi media presentations greatly enhances student learning. 9. It is important to educate field instructors regarding the group seminar content, in order for them to integrate this content and allow students to complete seminar assignments in the field placement. 10**.** It is a critical component to the student’s learning that the seminar instructors act as mentors and role models and have extensive backgrounds in child welfare. 11. The seminar instructor’s participation in the process exercises models the ability to risk in the classroom and enhances student learning. 12. High ratio of number of instructors to students allows for rich coaching opportunities in learning new skills.

**Description of Project / Intervention:**

This project developed two integrated seminars; one delivered to foundation year students and one to concentration year students. All CALSWEC Field Instructors were introduced to the curriculum by the CALSWEC field faculty and gave input into its development. Field Instructors also agreed to facilitate students completing group seminar assignments in their field placements. Field Instructors trainings/meetings were facilitated by CALSWEC field faculty four times a semester. All concentration year students were placed in two DCFS student field unit (pilot project initiated by DCFS in response to USC’s FII). Four foundation yeas students were placed in a pilot student field unit in a community based child welfare agency. These seminars were designed to prepare students to provide appropriate social work services to clients in public child welfare, to analyze the strengths and barriers in the clients’ social systems and communities that are significant to helping clients achieve their goals, to think critically, to be self aware, to understand the impact of culture on behavior, and to integrate evidence based best practices in child welfare into their work with clients. This is accomplished through didactic, multi-media, case presentations, role play, and other experiential exercise as well sharing with consumers and public child welfare social workers.

**Mission/Vision:**

1. To enhance the education of the students in the integration of the EPAS standards and CALSWEC competencies into field instruction and public child welfare practices. 2. Strengthen the collaboration with public child welfare field agencies and field instructors. 3. To maintain and strengthen the student’s commitment to CALSWEC during and post MSW program. 4. To strengthen the relationship between CALSWEC students and CALSWEC field faculty there by increasing the support to the students.

**Implementation Start Date:**

July 1. 2011

**Current Project Status:**

We are currently in our second academic year of implementation. We have two field seminars; one foundation and one concentration each meeting weekly, We have established two field units, one foundation year unit with **Children,** **Youth and Family Collaborative, and two concentration year units with LA County DCFS. We have had four meetings with CALSWEC field instructors and CALSWEC field faculty to review the curricula, receive input and integrate with the individual field instruction. We have completed the fall seminars (foundation and concentration year students), we have completed the curriculum design for spring seminar and we are in the process of scheduling CALSWEC field instructors/field faculty meetings. We completed the pre-test via survey monkey in the fall and will complete the post via survey monkey at the end of the spring semester.**

**Project Goals / Achieved Outcomes:**

The goals were to: to strengthen the partnerships between CALSWEC agencies, field instructors, and USC CALSWEC field faculty, to deliver the integrated EPAS standards and CALSWEC competency based curricula to students, to integrate the field curricula with the individual field instruction for each student, to measure students satisfaction with the CALSWEC field initiative program, to measure the students increased knowledge based on the group seminar field curriculum, and to increase the students support from and commitment to the CALSWEC program during the MSW program and post graduation.

The achieved outcomes are: strengthen the partnerships between CALSWEC agencies, field instructors, and USC CALSWEC field faculty ;demonstrated by the increased field instructor participation in trainings/meetings, and through the development of the field units, delivered the integrated EPAS standards and CALSWEC competency based curricula to students, integrated the field curricula with the individual field instruction for each student, increased the students support through consistent contact with CALSWEC field faculty and mentoring and increased students support to one another through the weekly group seminars.

**Barriers to Implementation:**

Barriers we faced are: difficulty of scheduling meetings with child welfare field instructors due to their workloads, administrating the pre-post test in a way to maximize responses, to get input from all the CALSWEC field instructors working with our students, and to maximize the return of the field instructor satisfaction survey, working with challenging students with intensive interactive curriculum. Student challenges include: lack of professional engagement skills, lack of work/life experience, lack of self awareness, issues with professional boundaries, mental health/health issues, lack of academic preparation (under-developed writing, verbal skills, professional communication, and inability to think critically)

**Future Directions:**

We hope that both the foundation year and concentration year field agencies will continue their commitment to provide field units to our CALSWEC students. We want to continue the field instruction model with both foundation/concentration year students, and to identify sustainable funding for this project in collaboration the field agencies.

**Participants**

*You may refer to the Levels of Partnership document*

* **Students**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year of initiative (if pilot has been operating for more than 1 year) | Number of foundation year students | Number of concentration year students |
| 2010-2011 | 13 | 11 |
| 2011-2012 | 11 | 13 |
| 2012-2013 | 13 | 11 |

* **County Agency Affiliates (county agency staff stakeholders/collaborators)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year of initiative (if pilot has been operating for more than 1 year) | Position in Agency | Number of participants at this level |
| 2010-2011 | LA County DCFS- CSW’s, Intern Coordinator  Community –Based MSW’s | 14  9 |
| 2011-2012 | LA County DCFS-CSW’s, Intern Coordinator  Community –Based MSW’s | 12  8 |
| 2012-2013 | LA County DCFS-Supervising CSW’s/Intern Coordinator  Community –Based MSW’s | 3  9 |

* **University Affiliates (university faculty and staff stakeholders/collaborators**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year of initiative (if pilot has been operating for more than 1 year) | Position in University | Number of participants at this level |
| 2010-2011 | USC Center on Child Welfare Director, Assistant Director & Business Manager  CALSWEC field faculty/CALSWEC admin assistant | 7 |
| 2011-2012 | USC Center on Child Welfare Director, Assistant Director, & Business Manager,  CALSWEC field faculty/CALSWEC admin assistant  USC Center on Child Welfare Director & Assistant Director  CALSWEC field faculty/CALSWEC admin assistant, | 7  7 |
| 2012-2013 |

* **Community Collaborators (community member stakeholders / collaborators)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year of initiative (if pilot has been operating for more than 1 year) | Name of collaborating agency | Position in collaborating agency | Number of participants at this level |
| 2010-2011 | LA County DCFS Intern Coordinator, CBO agency staff. | Intern Coordinator  MSW’s | 1  9 |
| 2011-2012  2012-2013 | LA County DCFS Intern Coordinator, CBO agency staff.  LA County DCFS Intern Coordinator and supervising CSW’s  CBO agency staff | Intern Coordinator  MSW’s  Intern Coordinator/supervising CSW’s  MSW’s | 1  8  3  9 |

## Other Stakeholders/Collaborators

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year of initiative (if pilot has been operating for more than 1 year) | Who | How many |
| e.g., 2011-2012 | N/A | N/A |
|  |  |  |