



# **Field Instructor Assessment of Students' Geriatric Competence: What They Cannot Assess**

**Kayoko C. Nakao, MSG, MSW**

**JoAnn Damron-Rodriguez, LCSW, PhD**

UCLA School of Public Affairs

Department of Social Work

**Patricia J. Volland, MSW, MBA**

The New York Academy of Medicine

**CSWE Annual Program Meeting, Philadelphia, PA**

**October 31, 2008**

# Acknowledgement

This evaluation research is part of the Hartford Partnership Program for Aging Education (HPPAE) of the Social Work Leadership Institute (SWLI) at the New York Academy of Medicine funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation.



# Presentation Content

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  - Four domains in Geriatric Social Work Competency Scale-II
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# 1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1. To compare educational outcomes using the Competency Scale-II for HPPAE Students and an adapted version for Field Instructors (FI)
2. To identify areas that FIs marked as “Cannot Assess” during and after HPPAE
3. In order to understand the educational implications of “Cannot Assess” in geriatric social work field education
4. To assess the feasibility of FI assessment of student geriatric competence



# 1. Purpose Background

- Competency-Based Education and Evaluation (CBE) requires assessment and measurement of outcomes
- The FI Version of the GSW Competency Scale II moves toward an additional objective measure in addition to the self efficacy assessment of students
- The HPPAE Competencies are used in multiple forms of pedagogy including setting student learning goals for field and classroom



## 2. OVERVIEW: HPPAE

- **Goals:** To increase the number of competent geriatric social workers by developing aging rich field practicum sites
- **Identified Cross-Site Program Components**
  1. University-Community Partnerships
  - 2. Competency-Driven Field Education**
  3. Integrated Field Education Across Multiple Programs, Populations and Interventions
  4. Expanded Field Instructor Role
  5. Focused Recruitment for Geriatric Social Work



## 2. Overview: Procedure

- Total 68 schools as of 2008
  - 11 Demonstration Schools 200-2003
  - 10 Schools from June 2005 - June 2008 (Cycle 1)
  - 25 Schools from June 2006 - June 2009 (Cycle 2)
  - 21 Schools from June 2008 - June 2011 (Cycle 3)
- **Cycle 1 Schools (10 universities)**
  - Students took on-line survey at PRE, INTERIM, & POST HPPAE to assess their social work skills
  - Field Instructors also assessed their students' competency PRE (Student INTERIM) & POST HPPAE



## 2. Overview: Geriatric Social Work Competency Scale II

- Four important domains of geriatric social work skills relevant to field education
  - I. Values, ethics and theoretical perspectives
  - II. Assessment
  - III. Intervention
  - IV. Aging services, programs and policies
- 10 items in each domain
- Rating on 5-point Likert scale
  - 0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4
  - Not skilled at all - Beginning skill - Moderate skill - Advanced skill - Expert skill
- “Cannot Assess” for Field Instructors
- Score range from 0 to 40 (Total: 0 to 160)



## 3. Method

1. Analysis of Cycle 1 Students INTERIM & POST TO FI PRE & POST data (AY 2005 - 2008)
2. Descriptive statistics
  - a. FIs' & Students' background
  - b. Geriatric Social Work Competency Scale-II, both total and domain scores
3. Close examination of "Cannot Assess" items
  - a. Average number of "Cannot Assess" items by domains
  - b. Proportion of "Cannot Assess" by items during and after HPPAE



## 4. RESULTS: Field Instructor Characteristics (n = 117)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Age</b>	<b>M = 43.3 yr old, SD = 13.9</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>76.1% (n = 89)</b>
<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>92.3% (n = 108)</b>
<b>Social Worker</b>	<b>95.7% (n = 112)</b>
<b>Licensed Social Worker</b>	<b>54.4% (n = 62)</b>
<b>Practice Specialization: Gerontology/Aging</b>	<b>84.6% (n = 99)</b>
<b>Master's Degree in Social Work</b>	<b>82.6% (n = 95)</b>
<b>More than 4 Aging Courses Taken</b>	<b>49.6% (n = 58)</b>



## 4. RESULTS: Field Instructor Characteristics (n = 117)

<b><i>Variables</i></b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Professional Experience</b>	
10+ years in the Field of Aging	65.0% (n = 76)
10+ Years being Field Instructor	29.9% (n = 35)
Number of Supervising Students	M = 2.2 (Range 1-7)
<b>Practice Settings (3 highest %)</b>	
Area Agency on Aging	22.2% (n = 26)
Educational Institution	17.9% (n = 21)
Social Service Agency	15.4% (n = 18)



## 4. Results: Student Characteristics (n = 155)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Age</b>	<b>M = 31.7 yr old, SD = 10.2</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>86.5% (n = 134)</b>
<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>77.6% (n = 121)</b>
<b>Student Status</b>	
<b>Full-time student</b>	<b>88.4% (n = 137)</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> year MSW student</b>	<b>61.3% (n = 95)</b>
<b>Micro (Individuals, families, &amp; groups)</b>	<b>58.1% (n = 90)</b>
<b>Macro (Communities, advocacy, &amp; policy)</b>	<b>11.6% (n = 18)</b>
<b>Ageing Experience</b>	
<b>Volunteered with older adults</b>	<b>62.6% (n = 97)</b>
<b>Employed in service to older adults</b>	<b>35.5% (n = 55)</b>
<b>Academic Background</b>	
<b>Completed any courses on aging</b>	<b>53.8% (n = 84)</b>
<b>Specialization Gerontology/Aging</b>	<b>75.6% (n = 118)</b>

## 4. Results: Student and FI Competency Mean and SD at PRE, INTERIM, & POST HPPAE

<i>Variables</i>	<i>ST PRE</i> <i>n = 156</i>	<i>ST INT</i> <i>n = 123</i>	<i>FI PRE</i> <i>n = 117</i>	<i>ST POST</i> <i>n = 126</i>	<i>FI POST</i> <i>n = 121</i>
I. Values, ethics & theoretical perspectives	24.7 (6.8)	28.0 (7.3)	24.4 (9.4)	35.0 (7.3)	37.7 (6.5)
II. Assessment	20.4 (7.5)	23.9 (7.1)	17.9 (10.3)	35.0 (7.3)	33.0 (10.4)
III. Intervention	19.8 (6.9)	22.8 (7.1)	16.8 (9.4)	33.7 (6.9)	32.1 (9.9)
IV. Aging services, programs, & policies	17.5 (6.2)	21.2 (6.4)	15.5 (9.4)	31.4 (7.5)	27.8 (11.4)
<b>GSWC Scale-II Total</b>	<b>82.4</b> <b>(25.0)</b>	<b>96.0</b> <b>(24.8)</b>	<b>74.8</b> <b>(34.2)</b>	<b>136.7</b> <b>(24.6)</b>	<b>130.6</b> <b>(32.4)</b>

( ) = SD



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( ) = SD



## 4. Results: Average Number of “Cannot Assess” Items by Field Instructors at PRE & POST HPPAE

<b><i>Variables</i></b>	<b><i>PRE</i></b> <b><i>(n = 117)</i></b>	<b><i>POST</i></b> <b><i>(n = 121)</i></b>
<b>I. Values, ethics &amp; theoretical perspectives</b>	<b>1.1</b> <b>(2.1)</b>	<b>0.1</b> <b>(0.8)</b>
<b>II. Assessment</b>	<b>2.2</b> <b>(3.2)</b>	<b>1.0</b> <b>(2.1)</b>
<b>III. Intervention</b>	<b>2.7</b> <b>(3.1)</b>	<b>1.1</b> <b>(2.0)</b>
<b>IV. Aging services, programs, &amp; policies</b>	<b>2.7</b> <b>(3.1)</b>	<b>1.9</b> <b>(2.4)</b>
<b>GSWC Scale-II Total</b>	<b>8.8</b> <b>(10.3)</b>	<b>4.4</b> <b>(6.1)</b>



## 4. Percentage of FI who marked “Cannot Assess” in Assessing Student Competency

<b><i>Domain I: Values, ethics &amp; theoretical perspectives</i></b>	<i>PRE</i>	<i>POST</i>
I-1. Assess and address values and biases regarding aging	6.1%	1.4%
I-2. Respect and promote older adult clients	4.1%	.7%
I-3. Apply ethical principles	14.3%	4.1%
I-4. Respect diversity among older adults	4.1%	.7%
I-5. Address the cultural, spiritual, and ethnic values	10.9%	2.7%
I-6. Relate concepts and theories	11.6%	4.1%
I-7. Relate social work perspectives	10.2%	2.0%
I-8. Identify issues related to losses	15.6%	4.8%
<b><i>I-9. Support persons and families</i></b>	<b>25.2%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
I-10. Understand the perspective and values of social work	7.5%	1.4%



<b>Domain II: Assessment</b>	<i>PRE</i>	<i>POST</i>
II-1. Use empathy and sensitive interviewing skills	14.3%	4.1%
II-2. Adapt interviewing methods	19.0%	4.8%
<b>II-3. Conduct a comprehensive geriatric assessment</b>	<b>25.2%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>
II-4. Ascertain health status and mental health	19.0%	11.6%
II-5. Assess cognitive functioning and mental health status	19.7%	6.1%
II-6. Assess social functioning (e.g., social skills, social activity level) and social support of older adults	12.2%	4.8%
II-7. Assess caregivers needs and level of stress	23.1%	6.8%
<b>II-8. Administer and interpret standardized assessment and diagnostic tools</b>	<b>36.7%</b>	<b>29.9%</b>
II-9. Develop clear, timely, and appropriate service plans with measurable objectives	22.4%	6.1%
II-10. Reevaluate and adjust service plan for older adults on continuing basis	28.6%	11.6%



<b>Domain III: Intervention</b>	<i>PRE</i>	<i>POST</i>
III-1. Establish rapport and maintain an effective working relationship with older adults	10.2%	2.7%
<b>III-2. Enhance the coping capacities and mental health of older persons through a variety of therapy modalities)</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>
<b>III-3. Utilize group interventions with older adults and their families</b>	<b>40.8%</b>	<b>29.3%</b>
<b>III-4. Mediate situations with angry or hostile older adults and/or family members</b>	<b>39.5%</b>	<b>18.4%</b>
III-5. Assist caregivers to reduce their stress levels and maintain their own mental and physical health	27.2%	10.2%
III-6. Provide social work case management to link elders	14.3%	6.1%
III-7. Use educational strategies to provide older persons and their families with information related to wellness and disease management	21.8%	6.1%
III-8. Apply skills in termination in work with older adults and their families	50.3%	14.3%
III-9. Advocate on behalf of clients with agencies and other professionals to help elders obtain quality services	15.0%	4.1%
III-10. Adhere to laws and public policies related to older adults.	21.1%	8.8%



<b>Domain IV:</b>	<i>PRE</i>	<i>POST</i>
IV-1. Provide outreach to older adults and their families to ensure appropriate use of the service continuum	19.7%	8.2%
<b><i>IV-2. Adapt organizational policy, procedures and resources to facilitate the provision of services to diverse older adults and their family caregivers</i></b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>
IV-3. Identify and develop strategies to address service gaps	19.0%	12.2%
<b><i>IV-4. Include older adults in planning and designing programs</i></b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>19.0%</b>
<b><i>IV-5. Develop program budgets that take into account diverse sources of financial support for the older population</i></b>	<b>55.1%</b>	<b>52.4%</b>
<b><i>IV-6. Evaluate the effectiveness of practice and programs</i></b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>19.7%</b>
<b><i>IV-7. Apply evaluation and research findings to improve practice and program outcomes</i></b>	<b>36.7%</b>	<b>21.8%</b>
<b><i>IV-8. Advocate and organize with the service providers</i></b>	<b>22.4%</b>	<b>20.4%</b>
IV-9. Identify the availability of resources and resource systems	6.1%	2.0%
<b><i>IV-10. Assess and address any negative impacts of social and health care policies on practice with historically disadvantaged populations.</i></b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>



# FI Open-ended Comments

- Relations between the field and academic classes
  - My supervisee is intuitively skilled in social work theory and application of social skills with a diverse population. Unfortunately, her academic course did not prepare her for clinical intervention with clients dealing with loss, trauma, and other mental health related issues.



# FI Open-Ended Comments

- Micro-Macro
  - Since this was a macro practice, student did not have direct client experience. My information is based on conversations about situations that arise in the policy arena.
  - The instructor did not have the ability to gain insight into “losses, changes, and transitions” since the main focus of the practicum was not direct-practice, but management.



# FI Open-ended Comments

- Type of agency experience
  - Student did not have a counseling client and did not have the opportunity to develop a service plan or administer standardized tests.
  - Could not assess all aspects due the nature of our agency's work
  - When “Cannot Assess” is marked, it is because placement did not afford student the opportunity to cover all the possible areas in 32 weeks. This is not a reflection of her skill base.



## 5. Summary Findings: STUDENTS

- Vary in their academic standing and preparation
- Vary in their competency levels
- Demonstrate ability to self-assess (pre to interim to post; no ceiling effect)
- Increase their competency significantly in the HPPAE (reported elsewhere)
- Vary as a group by domains with the macro-skills in Domain IV being consistently lower



## 5. Summary Findings: FIELD INSTRUCTORS

- Vary in aging and supervision background
- Vary in practice settings
- Demonstrate the ability to assess students on the vast majority of competencies: 31 or 40 (78%) pre and 36 out of 40 (90%) at post
- Increased ratings of students markedly from PRE to POST
- Deferred assessment of certain items at both PRE and POST
- Vary as a group by domains with the macro-skills in Domain IV being consistently lower



# 5. Limitations and Future Research

- Relatively small sample size
- Descriptive statistics presented and multivariate analysis needed to link student and FI characteristics to assessment outcomes
- Comparison of FI learning competency assessment over time requires examination as do FI training impact in this area



# 5. Implications

- **HPPAE geriatric field education strengthens student skills across domains in serving older adults and their families**
- **Competencies are both micro and macro skills and to provide opportunity for assessment and growth of all skills matching placement sites to skill acquisition may be necessary**
- **HPPAE rotational model provides a means to accomplish this.**



# 5. Implications cont.

- **Field instructors may need training to use the CBE and rotational model.**
- **Norms for level of skill expectation may assist FI and students to use the CBE in standardized ways.**
- **Competency measurement is a promising avenue to guide field education and measure outcomes.**



# References

- **Geriatric Social Work Competency Scale-II**

Damron-Rodriguez, J. A. (2006). Moving Ahead: Developing Geriatric Social Work Competencies. In B. Beckman et al. (Eds.): Oxford Handbook of Social Work and Aging. Oxford University Press.

- **For further information on:**

<http://socialworkleadership.org/nsw/resources/products/competencies.php>

