

FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS

May 27, 2004

SUBJECT: Implementation Authorization for a Ph.D. in Social Work at the University of South Florida

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

Consider implementation authorization for a Ph.D. in Social Work (CIP 44.0701) at the University of South Florida.

AUTHORITY FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS ACTION

Article IX, Section 7 (d), Constitution of the State of Florida

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The proposed Ph.D. in Social Work at the University of South Florida will prepare scholars who are expected to generate new knowledge, pursue academic/research careers, and develop clinical services for diverse, vulnerable, and underserved populations. Unlike Florida's three existing doctoral programs, the program will be offered via nontraditional model through a combination of weekend and concentrated summer sessions designed to allow students to maintain full-time employment commitments.

The proposal provides a convincing argument of the need and demand over the next decade for more doctoral level graduates in Social Work, a discipline in need of advances in research and training in emerging areas of social concern. USF believes that barriers contributing to the shortage in Florida will be overcome through its program's model of delivery and location. Tampa is the only top 25 metropolitan area in the U.S. that does not have a doctoral program in Social Work. Strong support for this program has been expressed by many community partners and agencies, other USF colleges, advisory boards, and consultants. Dean Karen Sowers, of the University of Tennessee, was retained as a consultant to review the proposal, and strongly endorses its approval.

The USF Board of Trustees approved the proposal for the Ph.D. in Social Work at its May 15, 2003 meeting. If the Board of Governors approves implementation, the University plans to begin the program in the Fall of 2004.

Supporting Documentation Included:

Staff Analysis

Facilitators / Presenters:

Chancellor Austin / R. E. LeMon
USF Representatives

Staff Analysis
University of South Florida Proposed Ph.D. in Social Work

Estimated Costs:

	Total	% & \$ Current	% & \$ New	% & \$ C&G	Cost per FTE
Year 1	\$161,774	94% \$152,074	6% \$9700	0% \$0	\$43,140
Year 5	\$272,868	87% \$236,414	0% \$0	13% \$36,454	\$25,231

Projected FTE and headcount are:

	Projected Headcount	Student FTE
First Year	10	3.75
Second Year	10	3.75
Third Year	10	3.75
Fourth Year	25	9.37
Fifth Year	25	9.37

Analysis

On April 30, 2003, the Florida Board of Governors approved eight criteria, divided into the two categories of Readiness and Accountability, by which implementation authorization for new doctorates were to be assessed. The following is an analysis of the University's proposal based on further delineations of those eight criteria.

Evidence that the proposed program is listed in the current State University System Master Plan, and/or that the goals of the proposed program relate to the institutional mission statement as contained in the Master Plan

The program is not currently on the State University System Master Plan; however, it is aligned with the mission, strengths, and strategic directions of the University, and it represents an effort to contribute to the research mission of the University through an emphasis on direct and practical knowledge. USF's mission statement speaks to the promotion of "excellence in research to advance knowledge and promote social, cultural, economic, health, and technological development" and "engagement of the university in partnerships that respond to university and community issues." Three portions of the USF Strategic Plan of particular relevance to the proposed program include the following: to "(1) promote nationally and internationally distinctive research and graduate programs; (2) advance collaborative learning and discovery to improve the health of the community; and (3) establish USF as a national model for a university fully engaged with its local, national, and global communities."

Evidence that the proposed program does not duplicate other SUS offerings, or, if so, evidence of an adequate rationale for doing so

There are currently 3 social work doctorates in Florida, two of which are in the SUS (FSU and FIU), and the other at Barry University. There are no social work doctorates serving the central or west coast Florida regions. Of the top 25 metropolitan cities in the U.S., only Tampa is without a doctorate in social work. Additionally, the model of delivery is unique in comparison with the other SUS offerings. Consultant Dean Karen Sowers stated that the “model’s design is clearly quite innovative and responsive to the needs of mature adult learners.” These two factors (location and program model) are consistently used throughout the proposal as an argument for the program’s implementation.

Evidence that planning for the proposed program has been a collaborative process involving academic units and offices of planning and budgeting at the institutional level, as well as external consultants, representatives of the community, etc.

The proposed program has been in the planning stages since 1999, and represents a collaborative effort on the part of the School of Social Work, College of Arts and Sciences, and the University administration, with guidance from external consultants and professional advisory boards. The consultant-driven planning process involved collaboration and consensus building among faculty, administrators, and other interested parties; data collection; and development of admission requirements, curriculum, and strategies for national visibility.

Evidence of an appropriate timetable of events leading to the implementation of the proposed program

Implementation is planned for Fall 2004. This aggressive timeline for implementation reflects the pressing need for the program and the planning that has already taken place for its implementation.

Evidence that there is a need for more people to be educated in this program at this level

Through narrative and data analysis, the proposal provides evidence regarding the demand for doctoral graduates in Social Work. The proposal states that the demand for Ph.D. prepared social work educators and researchers will intensify in the next decade due the call for advances in research, training, and program development in emerging areas of social concern (aging, health, child/family welfare, and trauma) as well as a need for more university-level teachers. According to the Council on Social Work Education, the number of social work programs has grown by approximately 25% in the past decade. While approximately 250 Ph.D. graduates are being produced a year, this does not meet the predicted need of 350 Ph.D. graduates/year required to accommodate the expansion of social work programs (data provided by the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education). Traditional doctoral programs in Florida appear to be experiencing fluctuation in the numbers of graduates over the past five years, and the Florida Association of Deans and Directors of Social Work Schools

recognizes a shortage of doctoral graduates in Florida due to certain challenges (which USF believes will be met by its program's model of delivery and Tampa location). Information obtained through needs assessments conducted by USF's School of Social Work indicated a high local interest in a Ph.D. Of 105 USF School of Social Work graduates participating in a survey, 69 M.S.W. respondents and 36 B.S.W. respondents indicated an interest in a doctoral program. The proposal states that these numbers have remained consistent in subsequent surveys. Feedback by way of focus groups and mail has been obtained regarding interest in the proposed program. Also, overwhelming interest and support has been reflected in ongoing discussions with the School of Social Work Professional Advisory Board, which expressed such opinions in letters of support included in the proposal.

Consultant Dean Karen Sowers noted: "Social work is in dire need of well-trained doctoral level clinicians, administrators, researchers, and academicians. There is already a shortage... and the demand is expected to grow. B.S.W. and M.S.W. programs are growing at the rate of 25%... these programs are unable to staff their education programs... and competition to hire the scarce number of doctoral graduates... is fierce. The field is in desperate need of researchers... felt particularly in Florida... with the rapid growth of elderly and immigrant populations."

Evidence of reasonable estimates of headcount and FTE students who will major in the proposed program, and a commitment to achieve a diverse student body

The infrastructure to support a larger than expected student body is in place. Also, the headcount provided for Year 5 is comparable to peer programs in the state. A signed Equal Education Opportunity statement is included, and incorporates steps for increasing the already prevalent diversity demonstrated by USF's School of Social Work.

Evidence of an appropriate, sequenced, and fully-described course of study

The proposal provides a well-detailed course of study, complete with learning objectives, learning outcomes, and a master course schedule. The program is designed to provide intensive research training for social work scholars, and does so through a unique non-traditional model, involving intensive weekend sessions and three-week concentrated summer sessions culminating in 60 hours of study beyond the Master's degree (120 beyond the baccalaureate degree). The M.S.W. must be completed prior to admission to the Ph.D. program.

The program includes 30 hours of coursework, 6 hours of directed research in the student's area of specialty (such as gerontology, health, child/family welfare, and trauma), and 24 hours of dissertation work over the course of 5 years. During each of the first three years, students take 3 hours in the Fall and Spring semesters, and 6 hours in the Summer semester, with the directed research hours taking place during Fall and Spring of Year 2. Students will take Qualifying Examinations at the end of Year 2, and begin the dissertation phase at the start of Year 4.

Consultant Dean Karen Sowers stated that "the curricular design allows for mature,

working professionals (many with families and place-bound) to continue their careers while pursuing their doctorate.” The consultant also noted that “the content of the curriculum... is uniquely tailored to produce graduates singularly prepared for academic and research careers in clinical social work practice. There are only a handful of social work doctoral programs which have this focus, and none (of which I am aware) have been so masterfully and specifically designed to provide training in this area. For instance, the focus on research conceptualization, qualitative methods, and single subject research and program evaluations techniques will provide students with a unique and sound education for clinical research preparation. Also impressive is the emphasis in year two on ‘hands-on’ research which will result in a scholarly paper submitted for publication.”

Evidence of a relationship to specific institutional strengths

At present, the USF School of Social Work has a formal educational network of over 150 community agencies. There are also institutes and centers that have been established by the School including the Elder Mistreatment Research Laboratory and the Florida Kinship Center, which will provide an outlet for conducting research activity consistent with doctoral education. In addition, the program will be able to build upon relationships with the Department of Gerontology, College of Public Health, Florida Mental Health Institute (FMHI) and Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute. The proposed program is expected to positively impact the existing M.S.W. because that degree is one of the admission requirements for the Ph.D. The School is capable of absorbing an anticipated increase in M.S.W. students.

Evidence that progress has been made in implementing the recommendations from program reviews or accreditation activities in the discipline pertinent to the proposed program

The School of Social Work is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Following initial accreditation in 1976 and 1983 respectively, both the B.S.W. and the M.S.W. underwent reaffirmation review and subsequent reaccreditation for the full eight-year cycle in 1997. Four issues were recommended for improvement during the review (incorporation of macro content into practice courses, continuous efforts to employ and recruit diverse faculty, progress in changing visiting faculty positions to permanent tenure track lines, and the monitoring of field instruction). In February 1998, CSWE accepted an interim report provided by the School of Social Work and found that the issues had been satisfactorily addressed. In addition, CSWE requires that program expansion must be submitted for review to ensure continued compliance. Due to the rapid growth in the last two years at USF Lakeland, USF St. Petersburg, and USF Sarasota/Manatee, the School had to submit such information in 2001 and 2002. CSWE approved the programs under the “alternative program standards,” and copies of the approval letters are attached to the proposal.

Evidence that the institution has analyzed the feasibility of providing all or a portion of the proposed program through distance learning technologies via its own technological capabilities as well as through collaboration with other universities

The non-traditional model of delivery involving intensive sessions will be complemented by continuous learning throughout each of the semesters by utilizing instructional technology such as on-line blackboard mechanisms and web sites, serving students in areas beyond the typical commuting distance. The proposal indicates that there will be opportunities for doctoral students on other campuses to access the courses involving their unique foci, and for USF students to do the same at the other institutions. In addition, the Florida Social Work Dean and Directors support joint use of resources, which includes research and field internships.

Evidence that there is a critical mass of faculty available to initiate the program based on estimated enrollments

The number of faculty assigned to the program for Year 1 is more than adequate to initiate the program based on projected enrollments, with that for Year 5 also being acceptable. According to the proposal, and noted by the consultant, no additional faculty are needed to implement the proposed program, as the School of Social Work has anticipated the Ph.D. in recent hiring plans. Currently, there are at least 10 faculty qualified to staff the program. The University estimates 10 students in year 1, increasing to 25 by year 5. Due to the program's cohort nature, 10 of the 25 students included in the fifth year estimates will be in the dissertation phase.

Evidence that the faculty in aggregate have the necessary experience and research activity to sustain the program

The proposal provides evidence that the faculty have the necessary experience and research activity to sustain the program. Each proposed faculty member currently teaches in the School of Social Work, and has demonstrated the necessary experience, research, and productivity to sustain the program. Of the 10 participating faculty, 7 are tenured and 2 are on tenure-earning lines. Of the 10 proposed faculty for the program, 60% have external research support (approximately twice that of the peer institutions noted), and 100% have published refereed journal articles.

Consultant Dean Karen Sowers noted that the "faculty at the USF School of Social Work have the necessary credentials to delivery the proposed program. The Director of the School... is an internationally recognized scholar and academic who has extensive experience in the development and implementation of social work doctoral programs.....Recent faculty hires have particularly good scholarly records and will no doubt contribute strongly to the program. Faculty have expertise in community development, social work practice with children and adolescents and the elderly as well as social work practice in health and child welfare settings. All of these faculty have doctoral degrees and are competent to provide education and training at the doctoral level."

Evidence that, if appropriate, there is a commitment to hire additional faculty in later years, based on estimated enrollments

According to the proposal, no additional faculty will be necessary to initiate the program, as recent hiring plans have anticipated this doctorate, and the resource-efficient delivery model will not require shifts in resources.

Evidence that library volumes and serials are sufficient to initiate the program

The holdings of the library appear to be sufficient to meet the research mission and needs of the program. The USF Tampa Library contains 37,653 volumes available in Social Work and related disciplines, 178 journals in social work and related disciplines, a virtual library providing access to over 300 electronic databases in all subject areas, and 95 subscriptions to social work journals via electronic journal collections. Additional collections are also available through the Health Sciences and Florida Mental Health Institute Libraries.

Evidence that classroom, teaching laboratory, research laboratory, office, and any other type of space that is necessary for the proposed program are sufficient to initiate the program

Consultant Dean Karen Sowers stated that, "classroom and laboratory space appears more than adequate to house the proposed program." The office space, classrooms, and computer laboratories for the doctorate will be those currently available to the School of Social Work. Due to the model of delivery, commonly used space will be used during off-hours such as evenings and weekends, which will allow for full utilization of the existing facilities. The program will be housed at the USF Downtown Center (DTC), selected because of its central location for those students who will be commuting throughout the USF service region. The DTC has 11,000 square feet of classroom space, and all classrooms are equipped with internet access and instructional technology including computer, document camera, VCR, SmartBoard, Proxima projector, and videoconference capability. The facility also includes a 20-seat computer laboratory and a 20-unit mobile computer lab. In addition to the DTC, the School of Social Work has its own classroom space in two dedicated buildings on the Tampa campus as well as use of additional classroom space scheduled by the Florida Mental Health Institute, including five classrooms with 25 to 50 seat capacities each. The School of Social Work has the first priority in scheduling of these five classrooms. A building currently under renovation will provide a teaching laboratory that includes four interview rooms. Given the unique nature of social science research, most typical research laboratory activities are conducted in the community, particularly in social service agencies. Office space for a Ph.D. student office has been allocated as part of the renovation referenced above. The program indicates no anticipated need for any additional faculty office space.

Evidence that necessary and sufficient equipment to initiate the program is available

The proposal states that there exists sufficient instructional equipment to implement the program, and notes that any special equipment necessary to conduct and produce research will be procured through grants related to that research or through community agencies supporting the research activity. The USF Downtown Center has classrooms equipped for distance learning (online or videoconference), and one classroom on the Tampa campus has distance learning capability. All of the Center classrooms are equipped with internet access and instructional technology including computer, document camera, VCR, SmartBoard, Proxima projector, and videoconference capability, and the facility also includes a 20-seat computer laboratory and a 20-unit

mobile computer lab. Upgrading and replacement of computer equipment will be addressed by a College of Arts and Sciences 3-year replacement plan implemented in Fall 2003. The program anticipates that additional computer equipment will be made available from contract and grant funds.

Evidence that, if appropriate, fellowships, scholarships, and graduate assistantships are sufficient to initiate the program

Although the School of Social Work has been allocated 9 graduate assistantships for the 2003-2004 year, it is not anticipated that the availability of fellowships is critical to recruitment and retention functions. This is due to the nontraditional model of delivery, which has been developed so that students can maintain employment commitments while attending courses, obviating the typical “add on” costs of relocation and reliance on financial subsidies incurred by most students.

Consultant Dean Karen Sowers noted: “nine graduate assistantships have been allocated... to support the doctoral program. Since the delivery model for the proposed program will allow students to maintain employment commitments while attending courses, the amount of graduate assistantships appears more than adequate to support the program.”

Evidence that, if appropriate, clinical and internship sites have been arranged

According to the proposal, no internship sites are necessary for the program.

Evidence that, in the event that resources within the institution are redirected to support the new program, such a redirection will not have a negative impact on undergraduate education

It is not anticipated that the program will negatively impact existing undergraduate education, as appropriate faculty hires have been made in anticipation of the doctorate.

Evidence of a budget for the program that is complete, reasonable, comparable to the budgets of similar programs at other SUS institutions, and reflective of the proposal’s text

The proposal provides a complete and reasonable budget for the program that identifies the major costs. The Budget Table includes the relevant issues described in the proposal’s text. The program’s costs are in line with programs at other SUS institutions. While students will not have paid assistantships (as most will be fully employed while completing the program, contract and grant resources will be pursued as sources available for research assistance by Year 5. The proposal indicates that very few new dollars will be needed for a viable program and that, by Year 5, there is an expectation of increased external funding.

Consultant Dean Karen Sowers noted: “given the resources currently in place, the part-time nature of the program, and the School’s success in external funding, it does not appear that any additional resources will be required to implement and deliver the program.”

Evidence that, if appropriate, the institution anticipates seeking accreditation for the proposed program

The Bachelor's and Master's degree programs are fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. Each of those programs underwent reaffirmation review in 1997, and received reaccreditation for the full 8 year cycle. No accreditation bodies have oversight for Ph.D.s in Social Work; however, the proposal has been developed utilizing the Group for Advancement of Doctoral Education "Guidelines for Quality in Social Work Doctoral Programs."

Evidence that the academic unit(s) associated with this new degree have been productive in teaching, research, and service

The proposal provides sufficient evidence of productivity to indicate that the academic unit associated with the proposed degree has been productive in teaching, research, and service. Of the 10 proposed faculty for the program, 60% have external research support (approximately twice that of the peer institutions noted), 100% have published refereed journal articles, and the ratio of program publications to number of total program faculty is 1.6:1. Additional narrative and statistical data is provided which indicates that the academic unit associated with this new degree have been productive in teaching, research, and service.