



Council for Standards in Human Service Education

National Standards

ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN HUMAN SERVICES

<http://www.cshse.org>
2013 (2010, 1980, 2005, 2009)

I. GENERAL PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

A. Institutional Requirements and Primary Program Objective

Context: There is strong national commitment to the view that human services programs should develop professionals who provide direct or indirect services. These programs prepare human services professionals for a variety of functions related to the care and treatment of individuals, families, groups, and communities.

Standard 1: The primary program objective shall be to prepare human services professionals to serve individuals, families, groups, communities and/or other supported human services organization functions.

Specifications for Standard 1

- a. The program is part of a degree granting college or university that is regionally accredited.
- b. Provide evidence that the development of competent human services professionals is the primary objective of the program and the basis for the degree program title, design, goals and curriculum, teaching methodology, and program administration (e.g. through documents such as catalog, brochures, course syllabi, website, and marketing materials).
- c. Articulate how students are informed of the curricular and program expectations and requirements prior to admission.
- d. Provide a brief history of the program.
- e. Describe the student population including the number, gender, and diversity of students, as well as the numbers of full time, part time, and students graduating each year.
- f. Provide a complete program description, courses required, time to completion, and other program details (refer to catalogs and other appendices).

B. Philosophical Base of Programs

Context: A benchmark of human services education and services delivery is the interdisciplinary approach to learning and professionalism. Curriculum development integrates specific theories, knowledge and skills that are tied to a conceptual framework and underlying philosophy. This must be congruent with the CSHSE National Standards and reflect the major theoretical emphasis and uniqueness of the program and curriculum.

Standard 2: The program shall have an explicit philosophical statement and clearly defined knowledge base.

Specifications for Standard 2

- a. Provide a succinct philosophical statement that becomes the conceptual framework for the curriculum.
- b. Include a mission statement for the program.

- c. Demonstrate alignment with the mission of the units in which the program is housed (e.g., department, college, university, etc.)
- d. Provide a brief description of the major knowledge base and theories from which the curriculum draws to support the conceptual framework (e.g. counseling theories, biopsychosocial, systems theory, change theory, etc.).
- e. Describe the multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary approach to knowledge, theories, and skills included in the curriculum.
- f. Provide a matrix mapping the curriculum Standards (11-20) and Specifications to required courses. The information provided on the matrix must clearly reflect congruence with the information provided in the self-study narrative and the syllabi.

C. Community Assessment

Context: Human services programs continually interact with and affect human services delivery within the local community through field placements and alumnae/i. Programs should be designed to interface with the needs of major employers in terms of job needs and career ladders so there is an orderly and continuous supply of competent professionals.

Standard 3: The program shall include periodic mechanisms for assessment of and response to changing policies, needs, and trends of the profession and community.

Specifications for Standard 3

- a. If the program is less than five years old, provide documentation that supported the initial development of the human services program (such as a community needs assessment).
- b. An Advisory Committee shall be established to provide feedback regarding local, state, and national trends and needs, policy changes, and to act as an advocate for the program. The committee should include individuals representing the human services field, such as field experience agencies, employing agencies, citizen advocacy groups, alumnae/i, current students, adjunct faculty, and other persons related to the field of human services. Provide the following:
 1. A detailed description of the membership of the Advisory Committee (e.g. names, agencies, roles, relationship to program, etc.),
 2. Minutes of advisory committee meetings from the last two years, and
 3. A narrative or table of how the committee interfaces with the program in relationship to specific issues.
- c. Describe other mechanisms, if any, used to respond to changing needs in the human services field.

D. Program Evaluation

Context: To ensure the program is effective in producing competent professionals, the program must be evaluated on a regular basis. In addition, the program must assess how well the needs of students and graduates are being met. These evaluations/ assessments are the bases for modifying and improving the program.

Standard 4: The program shall conduct, and report to the public, consistent formal evaluations, which determine its effectiveness in meeting the needs of the students, community, and the human services field and result in modifications to the program as necessary.

Specifications for Standard 4

- a. The program has clearly stated measurable student learning outcomes that are tied to the standards and an assessment plan that has been implemented. Provide the following:
 1. Measureable student learning outcomes,
 2. Assessment plan, and
 3. Examples of assessment tools, e.g., rubrics, exams, portfolios, surveys, capstone evaluations, etc.
- b. The program shall conduct a formal program evaluation every five years. The formal evaluation shall include: student surveys, agency surveys, graduate follow-up surveys (directed to both graduates and their employers), active participation of the advisory committee, involvement of agencies where students are in field placements, course and faculty evaluations, and evaluative data mandated or conducted by the institution. Provide the following:
 1. A history of program evaluations,
 2. A description of the methodology,
 3. A summative analysis of the most recent evaluation, and
 4. A description of how and in what way the evaluation resulted in any change.
- c. The program must routinely provide reliable information to the public on its performance, including student achievement. [NOTE: This Specification relates to the need for transparency about a program's performance outcomes and student achievement (Specifications a. and b.)] Provide the following:
 1. Mechanisms used to share evaluative data with internal and external stakeholders. [NOTE: Program performance data and student outcomes, must, at minimum, be posted on the program's website, and the links must be included in the self-study narrative.]
 2. Content of information shared. NOTE: Public information provided by the program must include: 1) examples of student learning outcomes as defined by the program's assessment plan as required in Specification a; 2) examples of program effectiveness obtained through formal program evaluation as required in Specification b; e.g., student satisfaction, agency feedback, enrollment trends, graduates placement data, program quality improvement information, grade point average, student performance on standardized examinations such as the HS-BCP (Human Services Board Certified Practitioner) credential, program completion data, etc.]

E. Standards and Procedures for Admitting, Retaining, and Dismissing Students

Context: Students have a right to know, prior to enrollment, the standards of the human services program and the procedures for admitting, retaining, and dismissing students. Both academic and behavioral issues need to be considered.

Standard 5: The program shall have written standards and procedures for admitting, retaining, and dismissing students.

Specifications for Standard 5

- a. Provide documentation of policies regarding the selection and admission of students.
- b. Provide documentation of policies and procedures for enrolling, advising, counseling, and assisting students with special needs (e.g., minorities, students with disabilities, or otherwise disadvantaged or underrepresented students) in order to assure entrance of qualified individuals of diverse background and conditions. These policies must be consistent with the institution's policies.
- c. Provide documentation of policies and procedures for referring students for personal help.

- d. Provide documentation of written policies and procedures describing the due process for probation, dismissal, appeal, and grievance procedures affecting students.
- e. Provide documentation of policies and procedures for managing students with behavior or legal problems that may interfere with their development as human services professionals.

F. Credentials of Human Services Faculty

Context: Human services programs have relied primarily on professionals from fields such as human services, psychology, sociology, social work, counseling, political science, adult education, and nursing to provide teaching faculty. Since both field and classroom orientations are important characteristics of teaching staff, consideration should be given to faculty trained in human services and/or interdisciplinary methods and approaches.

Standard 6: The combined competencies and disciplines of the faculty for each program shall include both a strong and diverse knowledge base and clinical/practical experience in the delivery of human services to clients.

Specifications for Standard 6

- a. Include curriculum vitae of full-time and part-time faculty who teach human services courses. The vitae must demonstrate that:
 - 1. Faculty have education in various disciplines and experience in human services or related fields, and
 - 2. Teaching faculty have no less than one degree above the level of certificate or degree in which they teach. It is recommended that faculty have no less than a master's degree.

G. Essential Program Roles

Context: To balance the academic and experiential characteristics of human services programs, adequate faculty and staff should be available to fill essential program roles.

Standard 7: The program shall adequately manage the essential program roles and provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

Specifications for Standard 7

- a. Document that faculty have the ultimate responsibility for setting policies and determining the content, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum.
- b. Essential program roles include administration, curriculum development and review, instruction, field supervision, program planning, program evaluation, student advising, and student evaluation. Provide the following:
 - 1. A brief description of how the essential roles are fulfilled in the program, and
 - 2. A table matching faculty and staff positions and names with these roles.
- c. Describe how faculty and staff are provided opportunities for appropriate professional development.

H. Faculty and Staff Evaluations

Context In order to assure that all essential roles are continually fulfilled in a way that is relevant to community and student needs, programs need to periodically evaluate the performance of each faculty or staff member in relationship to individual essential role responsibilities (see Standard 7).

Standard 8: Evaluations for each faculty and staff member shall reflect the essential roles and be conducted at least every two years.

Specifications for Standard 8

- a. Describe the process for faculty and staff evaluation.

- b. Summarize documentation for faculty or staff evaluations and how they relate to the role statements. Documentation shall come from a variety of sources and may include, among others, student evaluations, administrative review, comments from field placement agencies, and peer review.
- c. Document how the evaluative process is used to identify strengths and limitations and how it is incorporated in specific procedures for improvement.

I. Program Support

Context: To remain relevant to community and student needs, human services programs require adequate faculty, staff, and program resources.

Standard 9: The program shall have adequate faculty, staff, and program resources to provide a complete program.

Specifications for Standard 9

- a. Include budgetary information that demonstrates sufficient funding, faculty, and staff to provide an ongoing and stable program.
- b. Describe how program and field experience coordination is considered in calculating the teaching loads of faculty. It is recommended that consideration be given to distance between sites, expectations of observation, documentation requirements, number of students enrolled in the field experience, and the characteristics of the student population.
- c. Describe how the program has adequate professional support staff to meet the needs of students, faculty, and administration.
- d. Describe how there is adequate resource support (e.g., technology, library, computer labs, etc.) to meet the needs of students, faculty, and administration.
- e. Describe office, classroom, meeting, and informal gathering spaces and how they meet the needs of students, faculty, and administration.

J. Transfer Advising

Context: In order to facilitate transfer of credits, link programs, and reduce confusion, each program should evaluate previous learning from lower level or parallel transfer programs and from life experiences. In addition, it should promote acceptance of credits from/by other institutions.

Standard 10: Each program shall make efforts to increase the transferability of credits to other academic programs.

Specifications for Standard 10

- a. Describe formal and informal efforts to collaborate with other human services programs on the transfer of credits.
- b. Briefly describe problems encountered by students in transferring credits.
- c. Summarize any formal and informal articulation agreements and describe how students receive the information.
- d. If the program grants credit for prior experiential learning, waives required credits, or allows substitution of required credits, document how the learning is substantiated and verified as equivalent to the field study hours or courses for which it is substituted.

II. CURRICULUM: ASSOCIATE DEGREE

The paragraph preceding each standard describes the context for the standard. The specifications following each curriculum standard define the content for the associate degree in human services. Each higher level of degree requires both additional content and a greater depth of knowledge, theory, and skills. The curriculum standards are divided into two parts: (A) Knowledge, Theory, Skills and Values, and (B) Field Practice. Note that critical thinking is included throughout the Specifications through words such as analyze, assess, appropriately respond, etc.

A. Knowledge, Theory, Skills, and Values

1. History

Context: The history of human services provides the context in which the profession evolved, a foundation for assessment of present conditions in the field, and a framework for projecting and shaping trends and outcomes. Thus, human services professionals must have knowledge of how different human services emerged and the various forces that influenced their development.

Standard 11: The curriculum shall include the historical development of human services.

Specifications for Standard 11

Demonstrate how the following are included as a major emphasis of the curriculum:

- a. The historical roots of human services.
- b. The creation of the human services profession.
- c. Historical and current legislation affecting services delivery.
- d. How public and private attitudes influence legislation and the interpretation of policies related to human services.

2. Human Systems

Context: The human services professional must have an understanding of the structure and dynamics of organizations, communities, and society as well as the nature of individuals and groups. This understanding is prerequisite to the determination of appropriate responses to human needs.

Standard 12: The curriculum shall include knowledge and theory of the interaction of human systems including: individual, interpersonal, group, family, organizational, community, and societal.

Specifications for Standard 12

Demonstrate how the following are included as a major emphasis of the curriculum:

- a. Theories of human development.
- b. Small groups:
 1. Overview of how small groups are used in human services settings,
 2. Theories of group dynamics, and
 3. Group facilitation skills.
- c. Changing family structures and roles.
- d. An introduction to the organizational structures of communities.
- e. An understanding of the capacities, limitations, and resiliency of human systems.
- f. Emphasis on context and the role of diversity (including, but not limited to ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, learning styles, ability, and socio-economic status) in determining and meeting human needs.

3. Human Services Delivery Systems

Context: The demand for services and the funding of educational programs has been closely related to identifiable human conditions including, among others: aging, delinquency, crime, poverty, mental illness, physical illness, chemical dependency, and developmental disabilities. The needs that arise in these conditions provide the focus for the human services profession.

Standard 13: The curriculum shall address the scope of conditions that promote or inhibit human functioning.

Specifications for Standard 13

Demonstrate how the following are included as a major emphasis of the curriculum:

- a. The range and characteristics of human services delivery systems and organizations.
- b. The range of populations served and needs addressed by human services.
- c. The major models used to conceptualize and integrate prevention, maintenance, intervention, rehabilitation, and healthy functioning.

4. Information Management

Context: The delivery of human services depends on the appropriate integration and use of information such as client data, statistical information, and record keeping. Information management skills include obtaining, organizing, analyzing, evaluating and disseminating information.

Standard 14: The curriculum shall provide knowledge and skills in information management.

Specifications for Standard 14

Demonstrate how the following are included as a major emphasis of the curriculum:

- a. Obtaining information through interviewing, active listening, consultation with others, library or other research, and the observation of clients and systems.
- b. Recording, organizing, and assessing the relevance, adequacy, accuracy, and validity of information provided by others.
- c. Compiling, synthesizing, and categorizing information.
- d. Disseminating routine and critical information to clients, colleagues, or other members of the related services system that is:
 1. Provided in written or oral form, and
 2. Provided in a timely manner.
- e. Maintaining client confidentiality and appropriate using client data.
- f. Using technology for word processing, sending email, and locating and evaluating information.

5. Planning and Evaluation

Context: A major component of the human services profession involves the assessment of the needs of clients and client groups and the planning of programs and interventions that will assist clients and client groups in promoting optimal functioning, growth, and goal attainment. At regular intervals, the outcomes must be evaluated and necessary adjustments made to the plan both at an individual client and program level.

Standard 15: The curriculum shall provide knowledge and skill development in systematic analysis of services needs; planning appropriate strategies, services, and implementation; and evaluation of outcomes.

Specifications for Standard 15

Demonstrate how the following are included as a major emphasis of the curriculum:

- a. Knowledge and skills to analyze and assess the needs of clients or client groups.
- b. Skills to develop goals, and design and implement a plan of action.
- c. Skills to evaluate the outcomes of the plan and the impact on the client or client group.

6. Interventions and Direct Services

Context: Human services professionals function as change agents and must therefore attain and develop a core of knowledge, theory, and skills to provide direct services and interventions to clients and client groups.

Standard 16: The curriculum shall provide knowledge and skills in direct service delivery and appropriate interventions.

Specifications for Standard 16

Demonstrate how the following are included as a major emphasis of the curriculum:

- a. Theory and knowledge bases of prevention, intervention, and maintenance strategies to achieve maximum autonomy and functioning.
- b. Skills to facilitate appropriate direct services and interventions related to specific client or client group goals.
- c. Knowledge and skill development in the following areas:
 1. Case management,
 2. Intake interviewing,
 3. Individual counseling,
 4. Group facilitation and counseling,
 5. Location and use of appropriate resources and referrals, and
 6. Use of consultation.

7. Interpersonal Communication

Context: The ability to create genuine and empathic relationships with others is central to the human services profession. These skills are applicable to all levels of education, and a greater proficiency is expected at each progressively higher level.

Standard 17: Learning experiences shall be provided for the student to develop his or her interpersonal skills.

Specifications for Standard 17

Demonstrate how the following are included as a major emphasis of the curriculum:

- a. Clarifying expectations.
- b. Dealing effectively with conflict.
- c. Establishing rapport with clients.
- d. Developing and sustaining behaviors that are congruent with the values and ethics of the profession.

8. Client-Related Values and Attitudes

Context: There are values and ethics intrinsic to the human services profession that have been agreed to as governing principles of professional practice.

Standard 18 The curriculum shall incorporate human services values and attitudes and promote understanding of human services ethics and their application in practice.

Specifications for Standard 18

Demonstrate how the following are included as a major emphasis of the curriculum:

- a. The least intrusive intervention in the least restrictive environment.
- b. Client self-determination.
- c. Confidentiality of information.
- d. The worth and uniqueness of the individual including culture, ethnicity, race, class, gender, religion, ability, sexual orientation, and other expressions of diversity.
- e. Belief that individuals, services systems, and society can change.
- f. Interdisciplinary team approaches to problem solving.
- g. Appropriate professional boundaries.
- h. Integration of the ethical standards outlined by the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) and the Council for Standards in Human Service Education (available on the NOHS website).

9. Self-Development

Context: Human services professionals use their experience and knowledge for understanding and helping clients. This requires awareness of one's own values, cultural bias, philosophies, personality, and style in the effective use of the professional self. It also requires an understanding of how these personal characteristics affect clients.

Standard 19: The program shall provide experiences and support to enable students to develop awareness of their own values, personalities, reaction patterns, interpersonal styles, and limitations.

Specifications for Standard 19

Demonstrate how the following are included as a major emphasis of the curriculum:

- a. Conscious use of self.
- b. Clarification of personal and professional values.
- c. Awareness of diversity.
- d. Strategies for self-care.
- e. Reflection on professional self (e.g., journaling, development of a portfolio, or project demonstrating competency).

B. Field Experience

Context: Field experience such as a practicum or internship occurs in a human services setting. Fieldwork provides an environment and context to integrate the knowledge, theory, skills, and professional behaviors that are concurrently being taught in the classroom. It must be an integral part of the education process.

Standard Number 20: The program shall provide field experience that is integrated with the curriculum.

Specifications for Standard 20

As evidence of meeting this standard, programs must:

- a. Provide a brief description of the overall process and structure of the fieldwork learning experience.
- b. Provide evidence that one academic credit is awarded for no less than three hours of field experience per week.
- c. Demonstrate that students are exposed to human services agencies and clients (assigned visitation, observation, assisting staff, etc.) early in the program.
- d. Provide a copy of the current manual and guidelines that are given to students advising them of field placement requirements and policies.

- e. Provide documentation of written learning agreements with field agencies that specify the student's role, activities, anticipated learning outcomes, supervision, and field instruction. The agreement must be signed by the appropriate agency director, fieldwork supervisor, program instructor, and student.
- f. Provide syllabi for required seminars. Seminars must meet no less than every two weeks. Seminar hours must not be included in field experience hours.
- g. Provide evidence that required field experience is no less than 250 clock hours.
- h. Demonstrate how the field experience provides the student an opportunity to progress from:
 - 1. Observation to
 - 2. Directly supervised client contact to
 - 3. Indirectly supervised client contact.
- i. Demonstrate that field supervisors have no less than the same degree the program awards. It is strongly recommended that field supervisors have no less than one level of degree above the level of degree awarded by the program.
- j. Demonstrate that the program continually monitors the progress of each student and performs no less than one site visit to each field placement site per quarter or semester.