



Council for Standards in  
Human Service Education

# Bulletin

Gigi Franyo, Ph.D., HS-BCP  
Editor

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Elaine R. Green, Ed.D., HS-BCP  
Chestnut Hill College  
CSHSE President

The big news in 2014 for CSHSE was receiving notification from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) that we were granted recognition. This recognition was the culmination of more than seven years of hard work and continued efforts by members of the CSHSE Board. CHEA is “a national advocate and institutional voice for self-regulation of academic quality through accreditation. CHEA is an association of 3,000 degree-granting colleges and universities and recognizes 60 institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations.” (CHEA At-A-Glance: [http://www.chea.org/pdf/chea-at-a-glance\\_2012.pdf](http://www.chea.org/pdf/chea-at-a-glance_2012.pdf))

However, now that we have received CHEA recognition, our work is not over. CSHSE will continue to monitor our accredited programs to ensure that programs and/or institutions routinely provide reliable information to the public on student achievement. This involves having direct links to performance and student achievement information for the program. (See CSHSE Standard 4 B & 4C).

To celebrate CHEA recognition, several past CSHSE board members will be joining us at the Thursday luncheon scheduled for this year's National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. If you are attending the conference, please be sure to join us at the luncheon and

also for a CSHSE member reception to be held later that day. (More details to follow.)

Elections were held at our recent June board meeting. At that time, Jean Kennedy, MA., LMHC, Quinsigamond Community College, was re-elected CSHSE Secretary, and I was re-elected to a second term as President. We are both very excited to continue our work on the CSHSE board.

In our ongoing efforts to improve internal and external communications, the Board has developed a membership certificate that will be sent to each program that joins the Council and to each program that renews its CSHSE membership. This certificate can be framed and proudly displayed in your department. (Accredited programs receive an additional certificate.)

New CSHSE brochures are now available. Membership recruitment efforts are everyone's responsibility. Please contact us if you know of a human service program that might be interested in joining the Council. Also, let us know if you would like to be a self-study reader or work with CSHSE in some other way. We value your participation!

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# Going Far; Going Together: A Learning Community Model for Human Service Education

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Research over the last 25 years informs us we learn better, heal faster, and are more productive and healthier when we feel connected to others. How can we infuse these compelling findings into our Human Service programs to promote student retention, improve learning outcomes, and positively impact our clients and communities? One option is the Learning Community. This approach has been successfully utilized for over 40 years by Allegany College of Maryland's (ACM) Human Service Associate Degree Program.

Originally developed in 1973 by the Program's first Director, Paul Potesta, this approach to human service education provides a rich opportunity for students to learn from classmates and faculty while experiencing the challenges and benefits of building a healthy, supportive community. Self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and an understanding of the healing power of relationships are acquired not only from classroom and field work instruction, but also in the real world laboratory of the cohort community.

## Conceptual Components of the Program

### *A Relationship Centered Learning Community Approach*

Research and best practices from the fields of integrative health, social work, and education infuse ACM's learning community approach. Using a selective admissions model, 17 students are accepted into the Clinical Phase: a sequential, four semester cohort group of students who enroll in the required skills classes with two full-time Human Service faculty. Clinical Phase students and faculty are partners in a common journey for personal insight, trust, competence, wellness, and the development of community. Skills are continuously practiced to insure the transfer of learning beyond the educational setting into personal and professional practice.

### *A Psycho-educational Framework*

The psycho educational model (training as treatment) empowers students to experience the stages involved in personal and community change. In turn, students model, teach, and co-create the same process with clients. The guiding principle is "We walk our talk."

### *An Active, Experiential Learning Methodology*

Classroom and field instruction draws on the work of Maryellen Weimer, Robert Barr, and John Tagg as well as activist educators Paulo Freire and Myles Horton. All emphasize the importance of active, relationship-based learning which engages the emotions and is relevant to student lives and career goals. Parker Palmer's emphasis on inward reflection and self-knowledge as a tool for outward action is another cornerstone of the Program. Cohort community meetings provide a laboratory for developing these self-awareness, interpersonal, decision-making, problems solving, and conflict resolution skills.

### *A Focus on Civic Engagement, Social Justice, and Empowerment*

The Program embraces a community organization/community development approach which addresses the root causes of social problems versus symptoms. Health/mental health challenges and social problems are viewed through the lens of community and cultural values, power, and civic engagement. Engaged citizens and empowered communities are seen as foundational units of social change and human service professionals as leaders in fostering the democratic process.

### *A Holistic, Solution-focused, Strength-based Model of Health and Healing*

A strong emphasis is placed on the student's development as a total person (mind/body/spirit). The focus on strengths and the importance of community in the healing and change processes emerge from the work of noted psychologist and author Bill O'Hanlon and psychiatrist Dr. James Gordon, Executive Director of the Center for Mind Body Medicine ([www.cmbm.org](http://www.cmbm.org)). This framework promotes the belief that people are capable of positive change and that individuals, families, and communities have a natural and intrinsic healing capacity. The role of spirituality in healing and self-care is heavily emphasized.

## Challenges

Like democracy itself, creating and living in community is messy, unpredictable, and requires constant attention and commitment. However, most students have been educated in an individualistic, hierarchical

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system where they are passive recipients of information dispensed by “experts” (teachers) according to established classroom rules. Grades, not learning, are the focus; students are encouraged to compete for status.

A learning community requires just the opposite: deep listening (versus merely hearing), active involvement, shared responsibility and collaboration, vulnerability on the part of both student and faculty, diverse and conflicting ideas, mistakes as opportunities for growth, a focus on learning (versus being educated), and an internal development of values, personal meaning, character, and style. Since few students have experienced this type of learning, the learning community can initially be perceived as chaotic and the teacher as “not doing their job”.

However, students emerge from the Program expressing a profound sense of self-confidence, a deep respect for the empowering aspects and skills of living in community, a tolerance for change and uncertainty, and an awareness that getting through challenging situ-

ations is not only a result of personal strength and skills, but of the support and resources of the community. These outcomes are documented in written assessments and oral reflections given during final semester student exit interviews as well as surveys done with graduates, employers, and field supervisors.

In addition to skill and personal development, alumni surveys cite the following three “learning communities” which continue beyond graduation:

- lifelong personal friendships with classmates
- a support system with other Human Service graduates as they enroll in advanced degree programs at area universities
- a multi-generational “old boy/girl mentoring network” of alumni who share common values, experiences, and a commitment to the Human Service “family”

ACM’s Human Service Program has created a lifelong learning community which illustrates the old African proverb: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together”!

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## Ideas for Cultural Competence in Social Change

Harold Gates, MSSW, CISW, HS-BCP

Madison College

CSHSE North Central/Midwest Regional Representative

For a while now, I have been thinking about what can be done to help us move beyond our “mental blocks” to work together to make situations better as they relate to economic and racial disparities that exist in our community. A recent *Capital Times* article, “Justified Anger,” written by Rev. Alex Gee, has prompted this line of thinking. I will attempt to briefly sketch out some ideas that can serve as a culturally competent framework to be used by community members to make sense of it all.

A personal action plan might consist of the following three part framework:

- Self Awareness
- Knowledge
- Skills

Each of these areas can serve as a way to have meaningful dialogue when talking about the above-mentioned economic and racial disparities. I have also been discussing with a friend and business partner, the connection between cultural competence and mindfulness. The connecting element between these useful concepts seems to be compassion. In his book, *Search Inside Yourself* (2012), C.M. Tan discusses compassion, which can be useful in our process to becoming more culturally competent. Compassion is more in-depth when compared to empathy and can be a chal-

lenge to practice on a regular basis. That is not to say that it is not worth the effort. I think that we will find that it is.

Thupten Jinpa, a Buddhist scholar, once observed that compassion is “a mental state endowed with a sense of concern for the suffering of others and aspiration to see that suffering relieved.” As Jinpa describes it, the influential nature of compassion has the following three major components:

- A cognitive component: “I understand you.” (i.e., where you are coming from)
- An affective component: “I feel you.”
- A motivational component: “I want to help you”.

This simple description can help us be more tuned into the person or persons that we are relating to given the immediate context of the situation. Empathy helps us relate to how a person is feeling, while compassion helps us actually tune into that person(s) suffering or state of distress, so that we step outside our own head to act on the situation(s) causing the disparities that exist in our various communities. Compassion involves a transformation in our way of being with other people and helps us move from “I” to “We.” In other words, it is about going from self to others; thus, it can profoundly affect our acceptance of, and work with, others (Tan, 2012).

# Fitness for the Profession: A Model to Address the Growing Edges of Human Service Trainees

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Human service professionals have a responsibility to be agents of change in their work as culturally competent professionals in a rapidly changing society. Challenges often faced by these educators include how to help students reflect on professional and personal development, consider how they both intersect, and understand how success can be limited when unmanaged issues arise. Often, behavioral, attitudinal, and legal issues interfere with budding practitioners' abilities to be successful in the human services field. This article provides an overview of a proactive model from the University of Scranton that encourages student reflection on personal and professional development, and provides an approach to monitor students' "fitness" for the profession of human services.

As a Jesuit institution, the University of Scranton focuses on service provision and being "men and women for others." The Counseling and Human Services (CHS) Undergraduate Program fully embraces these ideals and seeks to train competent, self-reflective practitioners to be exceptional caregivers and service providers. Often, it is challenging to facilitate optimal growth of students who may not be "fit" for a profession that mandates direct service delivery to individuals, families, and communities. Our *Fitness for the Profession* model assesses students in an objective fashion and addresses their personal and professional challenges. Implemented by faculty in 2006, it provides a formal process for faculty and students to evaluate students' strengths and growing edges. The model, described by Morgan, Jacob, and Toloczko in a 2008 unpublished manuscript, has been successful in evaluating progress and fitness, and is used as a gatekeeping standard that provides explicit written policies and procedures describing expectations for students, along with due processes for probation, dismissal, appeal, and grievance procedures that may affect them.

Our goal was to clearly outline standards and procedures with an intentional and formal process addressing fitness of trainees for helping professions.

The core dimensions and procedures of our model, along with other formal evaluative and disciplinary procedures, work in conjunction to address the Council for Standards in Human Service Education's (CSHSE) standards for admitting, retaining, and dismissing students (Standard 5). In that vein, the beginning of our document states that:

The education of human services professionals' demands evaluation of one's values, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior patterns. In many ways the deepest challenge students will encounter is the combined task of self-assessment, self-correction, and self-direction in collaboration with others and across many areas of life: academic, clinical, professional, and personal. It is our hope and expectation that each undergraduate student who joins the Department will succeed in these tasks.

Students are provided with a copy of the *Fitness* document upon entry into the major. In addition to procedural information, it describes ten important characteristics of human services professionals (see Table 1) to help students understand what is expected of them, and to stimulate their ongoing self-assessment. While these dimensions are laced throughout our program, each student is required to provide faculty with self-reflective papers on several of these dimensions during each their regular and advanced internships courses. These papers serve as capstones of sorts for students' reflection on their abilities to be competent human service professionals. They also give faculty opportunities to measure student self-assessment and provide feedback to them not only on internships, but also on their overall experience in the program. These assignments may be used in conjunction with our annual formal review of each student as well as ongoing reviews of students who may be experiencing difficulties.

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**Table 1**  
**The Attributes for the Fitness for the Profession Document:**

- |  |
|--|
| 1. Commitment to Wellness                |
| 2. Commitment to Learning                |
| 3. Core Academic & Clinical Competencies |
| 4. Professional Identity                 |
| 5. Personal Maturity                     |
| 6. Responsibility                        |
| 7. Interpersonal Skills                  |
| 8. Communication Skills                  |
| 9. Problem-Solving                       |
| 10. Stress Management                    |

Our approach allows for us to discover the need for remediation early enough in the students' program so that we may support them toward a plan for success and/or take disciplinary action if needed. It also has the unique aspect of focus on ethical responsibilities involved in gatekeeping for the profession. While students are continually monitored throughout the program, at yearly student reviews, faculty discuss each

students progress and may raise questions or provide feedback about students' performance in any of the *Fitness* or other areas. A report is subsequently generated for each student's file, and issues are addressed accordingly using the *Fitness* model procedures as needed.

As Morgan, Jacob, and Toloczko (2008) note, the CSHSE national standards envision training regimens that are more than successful completion of coursework and demonstration of clinical competency in fieldwork; they call for program focus on the use of the self to promote health and client change. This is a strong charge for human service professionals to address the demands of practice and the qualities needed for practitioners. Overall, our *Fitness* model provides tangible guidelines and procedures to promote appropriate and thoughtful human service education with fairness toward all students. We are proud of our model and believe it to be beneficial to students, faculty, and of course, the clientele that our students will eventually serve.

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## Helping Students Understand Immigration

Lauri Weiner, J.D., HS-BCP  
 Stevenson University  
 Human Services Department

Immigration is an extremely controversial topic, which is often in the news and has become very politicized. It is important for human services students to understand immigration because this knowledge will help them to be more culturally competent when working with this population. It is helpful for students to understand immigration from the perspective of an immigrant and to know what is actually involved in becoming a United States citizen instead of listening to the political and media hype. This article will address the goals of immigration, how people can come here legally, and why many people come here without following the legal process.

The United States government has several goals related to immigration. These goals are: to reunite families, to admit workers, to provide a place of refuge, and to increase the diversity of our population. In order to attain these goals, the United States provides permanent visas in these categories as well as many others.

An American citizen can bring a spouse, children

under the age of 18, or his or her parents to the United States, and approximately 500,000 people enter the United States each year in this manner. There is a caveat in bringing parents here, which is that the American citizen must be over the age of 21. This avoids the issue of children born in the United States to undocumented parents being able to provide a path for legal citizenship.

Any other family relationship is subject to the family visa preference system, which applies to both relatives of American citizens and Legal Permanent Residents (LPR). Through the first preference, American citizens are allowed to bring unmarried adult children; married adult children with their families are covered through the third preference, and siblings and their families through the fourth preference. Legal Permanent Residents may bring their spouse and unmarried children through the second preference. These visas are limited to 226,000 per year and, in addition, there are caps based on country of origin (www.uscis.gov). There is a substantial backlog

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because the demand far exceeds the number of visas. Some families have to wait over 20 years to be reunited.

A second category of visas relates to the employment area. There are 140,000 total visas available in five preference areas, and there are caps within each preference. Within the employment area, the goals are to bring people of extraordinary ability, or those who have advanced degrees in subjects where the United States government desires their knowledge or to work in areas where an employer has clearly designated a lack of qualified citizens. Additional employment categories include former government employees (often from places where the U.S. has been involved in a war), and people who are willing to invest \$500,000 - \$3 million dollars and hire a minimum of 10 workers ([www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)). There are very few visas available for unskilled workers.

The third category of visas enables people who are refugees or who want to seek asylum to legally obtain permanent admission to the United States. Refugees apply from outside the United States and asylees apply from within. The President and Congress set caps based on regions of the world. The total number of visas available under this preference doesn't exceed 72,000 ([www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)). Refugees and asylees must prove a "well-founded fear of persecution" and be from a country the State Department has ruled as being eligible. They must go through a series of rigorous

interviews to be approved for this type of visa.

The last category of visas falls under the category of diversity. The goal is to allow people to immigrate to the United States from countries that are underrepresented in terms of immigration to the United States. Each year certain countries are banned from obtaining this type of visa based on immigration rates of the past five years. There are caps based on regions of the world as well. An electronic lottery is held, which determines who will be able to come in a particular year. There are only 50,000 visas available, and millions apply ([www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)).

Current events demonstrate that people come to the United States illegally. It is very difficult for people to come legally, because they may be ineligible to enter the United States based on both the requirements of various visas as well as the number of visas that are available in any given year. As human services professionals, we understand that people want to be reunited with family members in a reasonable period of time, to improve their economic circumstances or to live somewhere safe. However, United States immigration policy severely limits these options legally, so many people come to start a new life without proper documentation.

Editor's Note: In the next edition of the *Bulletin* the author will share a variety of classroom activities related to immigration.

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## Members Provide Input to Council on Standards and Accreditation Process

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The Council on Standards in Human Services Education (CSHSE) accredits human service education programs based on rigorous, research-based standards. CSHSE will engage in a review and revision of the standards in 2015. In April 2014, the external communications subcommittee conducted a survey of members, including those member programs that are currently accredited and those considering accreditation to obtain information about how members view the standards. The intent of the survey was to provide feedback about the members' perspective regarding the

value of each standard, the creation of a student-to-faculty ratio, and their general interaction with CSHSE.

### Overview of Survey Findings

Forty-seven members responded to the survey, representing 26 accredited programs and 11 currently not accredited and 8 in process of becoming accredited; with 31 respondents having previously assisted in writing a self-study. Respondents strongly endorsed CSHSE's 20 standards for accreditation and reported that most were highly relevant to human service educa-

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tion programs. However, survey responses indicated that the board should consider revisions, additions or clarifications to some specific standards, including the following:

- **Standard 4** - refers to member institutions reporting data to the public on the effectiveness of their programs. This standard is critical to the success and effectiveness of human services education program graduates and an increasing focus of federal funding.
- **Standards 8 and 9** - refer to the evaluation of faculty and sufficient faculty and other resources for comprehensive programs.
- **Standard 10** - refers to the transferability of credits.
- **Standards 12, 13, 14 and 18** - refer to elements of the curriculum. In particular, the board will consider adding reference or requirements for cultural competence.

The survey also gathered information from members on the additional issues impacting accreditation, including faculty-student ratios in course work and field work and offered respondents an opportunity to

provide the Council with insight into the types of support most helpful in completing the accreditation process. More than 80% of respondents felt it was important/very important for the Council to set faculty-student ratios and the board will consider the recommendations offered by respondents in the forthcoming review process.

Finally, respondents agreed that Regional Directors were very helpful in answering questions about the self-study and accreditation process. Respondents suggested that sample self-studies or best practices in response to specific standards would be helpful.

### What's Next?

The Board is continuing to review the survey responses and conducting a review of the literature and best practice regarding the specific standards discussed above that warrant further revision to prepare for the 2015 Standards Review process. Member input is always welcome; please submit your comments or questions to [info@cshse.org](mailto:info@cshse.org).

For additional information, please find a summary of the information by following the link below.  
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1DJsj92PZ4QdZn8W66MS-rVCROGSVuMHPqmk8iKw9kU/viewanalytics#start=publishanalytics>

## Accredited/ Re-Accredited Programs

**Congratulations to the most recent programs to earn CSHSE accreditation or re-accreditation. (A complete list of CSHSE accredited programs is available at [www.cshse.org/members.html](http://www.cshse.org/members.html))**

Allegany College of Maryland	(MD)
College of DuPage	(IL)
Florence-Darlington Technical College	(SC)
Great Basin College	(NV)
Montgomery County Community College	(PA)
Southeast Community College (conditional)	(NE)
Trident Technical College	(SC)
University of Oregon	(OR)

**CSHSE welcomes the following new and rejoining members: (A complete list of CSHSE member programs is available at [www.cshse.org/members.html](http://www.cshse.org/members.html))**

Arkansas Tech University - Ozark Campus	(AK)
Central Piedmont Community College	(NC)
Edison State College	(FL)
Judson University	(IL)
Prince George's Community College	(MD)

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