

**The Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership
Child Welfare Education Program Evaluation**

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List of Tables	3
List of Figures	4
1. Executive Summary	5
2. Evaluation Overview	7
3. History of University Partnership Child Welfare Education Program	8
4. Methods	10
a. Sample	10
b. Electronic Surveys.....	11
c. Telephone Interviews	11
d. Campus Coordinator Focus Group	13
5. Results	14
a. Electronic surveys	14
b. Telephone interviews	35
c. Campus Coordinator focus group	41
6. Conclusions	48
7. Recommendations	50
a. Suggestions for Programmatic Changes.....	50
b. Suggestions for Administrative Changes	52
c. Suggestions for Future Evaluation of UPP	54
8. References	59
9. Appendices	60
Appendix A	61
Survey for UPP Graduates.....	61
Appendix B	74
Survey for Field Instructors	74
Appendix C	84
Survey for Graduates' Employment Supervisors	84
Appendix D	93
Students Entering & Completing UPP 2002-2006.....	93
Appendix E	94
Ohio Counties with UPP Interns and Employees	94
Appendix F	95
Graduates – Suggestions for Improvement.....	95
Appendix G	98
Graduate Students – What contributed to preparedness?	98
Appendix H	100
Graduates – Reasons for taking job in child welfare	100
Appendix I	102
Field Instructors – Explanations for satisfaction with UPP	102
Appendix J	103
Field Instructors Suggestions for Improvements	103

List of Tables

Table 1. Number of students in UPP.....	10
Table 2. Graduates and field instructors invited to participate in evaluation.	11
Table 3. Online survey respondents.	14
Table 4. Respondents by year of graduation.	15
Table 5. Age at graduation, degree, & race of graduate respondents.	15
Table 6. Graduates accepting employment in public child welfare.	15
Table 7. Counties with UPP field placement students and graduate employees.....	16
Table 8. Graduates - Primary reasons for decision to accept position with public child welfare agency.....	17
Table 9. Graduates - Aspects of curriculum/program most contributing to	18
Table 10. Graduate responses: How has the supervision you received since hire contributed to your job satisfaction or dissatisfaction?.....	21
Table 11. Graduates: Explanation for how experience in the program positively contributes to current job satisfaction.....	22
Table 12. Graduates: Explanation for how the culture of public child welfare agency influences job satisfaction.	23
Table 13. Suggestions for improving UPP from graduates employed in public child welfare.....	25
Table 14. Number of students supervised per year.	27
Table 15. Extent to which UPP program components contribute to student readiness ..	27
Table 16. Field instructor explanation for satisfaction with involvement in UPP.	30
Table 17. Field instructors - Suggestions for improvement.....	30
Table 18. Overall preparedness for the job.....	31
Table 19. Supervisors' sense of graduates' confidence upon hire.....	31
Table 20. Supervisors' sense of graduates' competence upon hire.....	32
Table 21. UPP graduates compared to non-UPP hires in terms of core competency skills.	32
Table 22. Supervision needed by UPP graduates compared to non-UPP graduates.....	32
Table 23. Supervisors' overall satisfaction with UPP graduates.	32
Table 24. Preparedness of UPP graduates.	33
Table 25. Confidence of UPP graduates.....	34
Table 26. Competence of UPP graduates.	34
Table 27. Number of participants in follow-up telephone interviews.	35
Table 28. Evaluation designs.	56

List of Figures

Figure 1. Graduates' sense of preparedness.....	18
Figure 2. UPP Graduates' sense of confidence.....	19
Figure 3. Graduates' sense of competence.....	19
Figure 4. Overall job satisfaction for UPP graduates in child welfare positions.....	20
Figure 5. Contribution of UPP training to job satisfaction.....	22
Figure 6. Influence of agency culture on job satisfaction.....	23
Figure 7. Future work plans.....	24
Figure 8. Comparison of UPP to non-UPP graduates on core competencies.....	28
Figure 9. Field instructor rating of UPP graduate preparedness.....	28
Figure 10. Field instructors' sense of UPP graduates' confidence.....	29
Figure 11. Field instructors' sense of UPP graduates' competence.....	29
Figure 12. Graduates, field instructors, & supervisors' ratings on preparedness.....	33
Figure 13. UPP graduate confidence at graduation.....	34
Figure 14. Graduates', field instructors, & supervisors' ratings on competence.....	34
Figure 15. The evaluation design continuum.....	55

1. Executive Summary

This report presents the results of a process evaluation of the University Partnership Title IV-E Child Welfare Education Program in Ohio from 2002-2006. The University Partnership Program (UPP) was established in 2002 to provide a standardized curriculum of study to prepare social work students for careers in public child welfare. Pilot programs were launched in 2002 at two universities and the program was expanded in 2003 to include a total of seven public universities in Ohio.

The evaluation covers the first four cohorts of students who participated in the program and was designed to answer key questions about the overall success of the program as well as directions for future improvements. Primary data were collected from program graduates, field instructors, and the graduates' first employment supervisors through online surveys and follow-up telephone interviews. The university campus coordinators participated in a focus group.

The evaluation findings are encouraging and suggest that the UPP Title IV-E Child Welfare Educational Program is achieving many of the primary goals the program was designed to accomplish. A total of 85% of UPP graduates who participated in the evaluation accepted positions in public child welfare agencies in Ohio upon graduation. These numbers are similar to those provided by the state coordinator whereby records indicate 79% of all UPP students who graduated with BSW or MSW degrees accepted employment in public child welfare.

Study participants across program levels believe UPP graduates are well prepared overall for child welfare jobs. Across graduates, field instructors, and employment supervisors, 86%, 85% and 83%, respectively thought that the UPP graduates were adequately to extremely well prepared to work in a public child welfare agency. Indeed, 85% of field instructors and 83% of supervisors perceive UPP graduates to have better core competency skills than non-UPP graduates who received core training only.

The field instructors (85%) and employment supervisors (83%) thought the UPP graduates were adequately to extremely confident, and similarly, 89% of the field instructors and 83% of the employment supervisors thought the UPP grads were adequately to extremely competent when they began employment. In contrast, 41% of UPP graduates reported feeling adequately to extremely confident and 69% reported feeling adequately to extremely competent in the first three months after employment. The UPP graduates' sense of confidence and competence increased after three months on the job to 66% and 90%, respectively. Field instructors, supervisors, and campus coordinators attributed these differences to few opportunities for students to work independently during field practicum, a sense that students know more than they think they do, and that "flying solo" in the first year can be very scary.

Among the graduates participating in the evaluation, 90% are satisfied with their jobs in child welfare, 83% reported that they intend to work beyond their contract obligation for UPP, and 57% plan to pursue a career in public child welfare. Other participants were asked about their satisfaction with participation in the UPP. All field instructors were satisfied to extremely satisfied with their participation in UPP, would recommend the program to other social work students and would encourage their

colleagues to be field instructors. Similarly, all employment supervisors were satisfied to extremely satisfied with the UPP graduates, with 50% of them indicating they were extremely satisfied. All the employment supervisors would recommend their agencies hire other UPP graduates.

The evaluation also gathered suggestions across participant levels for improving the UPP program and administration. Three specific suggested areas for programmatic improvement were developed from the evaluation findings. The first is changes to the field practicum, such as providing more opportunities for independence and autonomy in the field practicum and earlier shadowing of experienced workers. Secondly, suggestions were made to change social work courses, for example expanding upon some current topics, including additional identified content, and reconsidering the time requirements for seminar. Finally, possible improvements in the program design include enhancing student incentives and delaying the pay-back work obligation to allow students to complete the MSW degree.

Participants also offered suggestions for improvement related to the administration of the UPP. The first suggestion, offered as a result of the evaluation process itself, is for the UPP to consider formally defining the UPP goals and to incorporate the goals into other program materials. While there appears to be a common understanding of the operational goals of the UPP, no formalized written statement of program goals exists. Other areas for administrative consideration include increased attention to building UPP-agency partnerships and increasing understanding of how graduate satisfaction with employment is linked with supervision and agency culture. Perhaps a more challenging suggestion by participants is to standardize how the UPP is implemented. An examination of findings across program levels illustrated challenges related to program differences across universities. Such a lack of uniformity suggests implications for quality control and future evaluation and research efforts.

Study participants also noted several areas where the UPP appears to be effectively meeting its intended goals. These specific areas include gate keeping in an effort to ensure appropriate candidates are selected for participation in the UPP and monitoring students' continued fit and employment readiness throughout the program. While areas of improvement were suggested related to university-agency relationships, it should be noted that field instructors and campus coordinators alike identified positive relationships with one another and/or between the agency and university that contribute to both field instructor satisfaction and campus coordinators' ability to monitor student performance.

Finally as part of this evaluation the evaluators aimed to assess the UPP's readiness for more rigorous evaluation efforts. A critical limitation to this study was a lack of access to and availability of data. Thus, while the finding that nearly 60% of the graduates participating in the study intend to pursue careers in public child welfare is promising, this finding should be balanced with the limitations of available data. The lack of an existing standardized way of gathering and retaining retention information across program sites or in collaboration with child welfare agencies prevented an accurate account of retention rates for UPP graduates compared to non-UPP hires. In an effort to prepare the UPP for a more advanced evaluation the evaluators make a number of substantive recommendations related to future evaluations of the University Partnership Program.

2. Evaluation Overview

This report presents the results of an evaluation of the University Partnership Title IV-E Child Welfare Education Program in Ohio for 2002-2006. The University Partnership Program (UPP) was established in 2002 to provide a standardized curriculum of study to prepare social work students for careers in public child welfare. Pilot programs were launched in 2002 at two universities and the program was expanded in 2003 to include a total of seven public universities in Ohio.

The evaluation of the program covers the first four cohorts of students (2002-2006) who participated in the program and is designed to identify the strengths of the program as well as directions for future improvements. Primary data were collected from program graduates, field instructors, and the graduates' employment supervisors in their first jobs through online surveys and follow-up telephone interviews. Data were also collected from the campus coordinators at each university in a focus group format. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (online survey), thematic summaries (telephone interviews), and content analysis (campus coordinator focus group). Descriptions of the research methods and the results are presented under three headings (1 electronic surveys, 2 telephone interviews, and 3 Campus Coordinator focus group) in the methods and results sections, respectively. The final section of the report presents conclusions drawn from the evaluation and offers suggestions for program planning and future evaluative efforts.

The evaluation was designed to answer several key questions pertaining to the operational goals of UPP. These questions are similar to those asked in other evaluations of Title IV-E programs reported in the literature (c.f., Fox, Miller, & Barbee, 2003; Jones & Okamura, 2000; Scannapieco & Connell-Corrick, 2003; and Vinokur-Kaplin, 1991). One group of questions pertains to *program outcomes for the graduates*. These questions are:

- Do students who participate in UPP accept positions in public child welfare agencies in Ohio upon graduation?
- Are those who accept employment in child welfare prepared for those jobs, and are they confident and competent in their skills when they complete the program?
- Do UPP students acquire the core competencies needed for child welfare practice?
- Are UPP graduates satisfied with their jobs in child welfare and do they plan to pursue a career in public child welfare?

Another critical part of the program's success depends on *the field instructors and the field practicum experiences* for UPP students. Questions of interest include:

- Are field instructors satisfied with their participation in UPP?
- Would field instructors recommend UPP to other social work students?
- Would field instructors recommend that colleagues serve as field instructors for UPP?

To further assess the success of UPP it is important to determine if the *agencies that hire the graduates* are satisfied with their competence and preparation for the job. Questions addressed by the evaluation in this area include:

- Are UPP graduates prepared for child welfare jobs, and are they confident and competent in their skills when they begin employment?
- How much supervision do graduates of the program need in their first jobs?
- Are the agency supervisors satisfied with graduates of UPP?
- Would the graduates' employment supervisors recommend that their agency hire more UPP graduates?

The evaluation is also intended to identify the overall strengths and weaknesses of the program and to suggest changes that can be made to improve UPP, including ways in which the evaluation of the program can be strengthened.

3. History of University Partnership Child Welfare Education Program

Child protective services and child welfare programs have been challenged by difficulties in recruiting and retaining a professional workforce that is prepared to respond to the needs of children and families in crisis. In an attempt to bring greater professionalization, higher quality services, and increased retention to the child protection workforce, federally-funded child welfare training programs were established with partnerships between state child welfare agencies and social work programs across the country through the Title IV-E funding mechanism (Zlotnik, 2002; Zlotnik et al., 2005a, 2005b, 2005c). These programs are designed to attract social work students to a career in public child welfare. Social work programs receive support for curriculum development and a wide range of costs related to program implementation (Zlotnik, 2002 ; Zlotnik et al., 2005a, 2005b, 2005c).

In Ohio, The University Partnership Program (UPP) was established in 2002 with Title IV-E funding to provide a standardized curriculum of study for social work students interested in pursuing employment in public child welfare agencies in Ohio. The intent of the program was to attract future social workers to public child welfare services by providing them with coursework, field practicum experiences, special seminars, and mentoring to prepare them for careers in this challenging field of practice. The University Partnership is a consortium composed of representatives from the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS), the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO), Ohio public universities with social work programs, county child protection agencies, the Institute for Human Services, and representatives from the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) who came together to develop and implement a coordinated program to prepare social workers for employment in the county public child welfare agencies. Beginning with the 2002-2003 academic year, specialized courses were offered to undergraduate social work students in two public universities (Ohio State University and the University of Akron). In 2003-2004 MSW students were added at Ohio State University and five other universities implemented the program for BSW students (Wright State University, the University of Toledo, Cleveland State University, University of Cincinnati, & Ohio University).

The intent of the UPP is to prepare social work students for beginning practice in a public child welfare agency. Students are selected for the program on a competitive basis from those who submitted an application to their university UPP coordinator. Those who are selected agree to take two specialized courses on child welfare practice that have been designed to help students acquire the core competencies for work in a public child welfare setting. Students also complete a one year field practicum in a public child welfare agency, attend special seminars, and meet with the campus UPP coordinator for advising, mentoring and help with job placements. Students who successfully complete the required coursework and field practicum, and graduate from the university are eligible for a stipend that is paid after they accept employment in an Ohio public child welfare agency. Currently, students are paid \$5,000 per year¹ for each year they are in the program (maximum of two years) and agree to work in a public child welfare agency one year for every year of funding. Those who choose not to take a position in a public child welfare agency or who terminate their employment before fulfilling the payback agreement must forfeit the stipend.

The UPP child welfare education program is intended to prepare social workers for careers in public child welfare agencies and to increase the retention rates for those who successfully complete the UPP program. More specifically, the program is designed so that those who successfully complete the program will: (1) obtain employment in a public child welfare agency in Ohio upon graduation, (2) report a high level of satisfaction with their jobs in child welfare, and (3) be competent and confident in their ability to quickly assume the responsibilities of their new jobs. Ultimately it is hoped that those who complete the UPP program will make their careers in public child welfare service. Four cohorts of students completed the UPP Child Welfare education program as of June 2006. The first group, graduating in 2003, has completed up to three years of employment in child welfare at the time of the evaluation.

The UPP is administered by a state coordinator (Ann Kipplen) who is responsible for assuring the smooth operation of the program, coordinating the activities of the campus coordinators at each university, serving as a liaison between the university programs and the state, and working with the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) to insure that the UPP curriculum is consistent with the training received by other Ohio child welfare workers. To monitor the program quality, the state coordinator conducted annual focus groups with the UPP field instructors and students at each university. Copies of her reports for each school are available from the Institute for Human Services (IHS). A secondary analysis of the yearly focus group reports was completed by Peg McGuire at Ohio University and is also available from IHS².

¹ The stipend was originally calculated as a reimbursement for the cost of tuition and fees paid by each student. This formula was used in year one but modified in year two to subtract any financial aid received by the student from other sources. In the third and fourth years of the program the \$5000 stipend was implemented.

² Contact the Institute for Human Services, 1706 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43203 for copies of these reports.

4. Methods

a. Sample

Participants in the evaluation came from four groups: (1) 2002-2006 graduates of the UPP program, (2) field instructors from 2002-2006, (3) the graduates' employment supervisors from their first public child welfare jobs, and (4) the campus coordinators for each university.

Table 1 shows the number of students who began and completed the UPP program between 2002-2006. Excluding the juniors in the program, 79% of the seniors and MSW students who completed the program accepted employment in an Ohio public child welfare agency. Those graduating with Bachelors or Masters degrees were invited to participate in the evaluation.

Table 1. Number of students in UPP.³

	Juniors	Seniors	MSW Students	Totals
Began program	59	163	9	231
Completed program	41	130	9	180
Accepted job in Ohio public child welfare agency	NA	105	5	110

Table 2 shows the number of field instructors and graduates who were contacted by the campus coordinators at each university either by phone or e-mail and asked to participate in an online evaluation survey. In many cases contact information was outdated and letters or e-mails were returned. The numbers below indicate the number of students and field instructors who received a request to participate in the evaluation. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the students who completed the program were contacted by letter or e-mail.

³ Data provided by Ann Kipplen, UPP state coordinator.

Table 2. Graduates and field instructors invited to participate in evaluation.⁴

University	Graduates	Field Instructors
University of Akron	14	5
Cleveland State University	11	4
Ohio State University	43	60
Ohio University	22	10
University of Toledo	24	12
University of Cincinnati	10	1
Wright State University	24	16
<i>Totals</i>	148	108 ⁵

b. Electronic Surveys

Three surveys were developed to collect data specific to the intended goals and objectives of the Ohio UPP program. The surveys were administered through Survey Monkey, a well-established on-line survey tool. Separate surveys were developed for the UPP graduates, the field instructors, and the graduates' employment supervisors (See Appendices A, B, & C for copies of the surveys).

Graduates and field instructors received letters/emails from the campus coordinators asking them to participate in the online survey and directing them to a website to complete the survey. After entering the website, participants were given additional information about the survey, as required by human subjects regulations, and were only allowed to enter the survey after indicating their consent to participate.

After completing the survey, respondents were asked if they would be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview. If so, they were asked to provide their names and contact information. Graduates of the program were also asked to provide the name and contact information for their first employment supervisor if they were willing to have them participate in the evaluation. The supervisors were then asked to participate in an online survey and for their willingness to participate in a follow-up telephone interview.

c. Telephone Interviews

At the end of all surveys respondents were asked if they would be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview. The follow-up telephone interview protocols were developed after survey data was examined to clarify or expand on responses provided on the survey. Separate follow-up questions were developed for (1) graduates who accepted employment in a child welfare agency, (2) graduates who did not accept employment in a child welfare agency, (3) field instructors, and (4) graduates' employment supervisors. The questions for each group were:

⁴ Data provided by campus coordinators at each university.

⁵ Five of these field instructors did not supervise UPP students during the years covered by this evaluation and were removed from the database prior to the analysis.

- 1) Graduates who accepted employment in a child welfare agency:
 - Would you have continued on to obtain your MSW directly after graduating with your BSSW if you could have delayed your contractual work obligation to the UPP program until completion of your MSW?
 - In what ways did you feel best prepared for your first job in child welfare services? What suggestions would you have for improving the program in this regard?
 - In what ways did you feel least prepared for your first job in child welfare services? What suggestions would you have for improving the program in this regard?
 - What specific courses and/or aspects of the courses most contributed to your preparedness for your first job in public child welfare?
 - Should the UPP program include content in the following areas:
 - Emotional/mental health aspects of child welfare work?
 - Child welfare agency culture
 - Legal issues and/or preparation for court involvement
 - Case management and case planning
 - Risk assessment
 - Is there anything additional you would like to share with us about your experience that can help us improve the program in the future?
- 2) Graduates who did not accept employment in a child welfare agency:
 - Would you have taken a child welfare position after obtaining your MSW if that option had been available to you to fulfill the requirements of the UPP program?
- 3) Field instructors:
 - What kinds of supports can be offered to agency field instructors to ensure students get the best educational experience?
 - In what ways do the following factors contribute to effective field instruction
 - Years of child welfare experience
 - Field of degree
 - Level of degree (bachelors, master's)
 - Number of students supervised concurrently
 - Field instructors rated students as more confident and competent than students rated themselves on the surveys. What insights can you offer to this finding?
 - Is there anything additional you would like to share with us about your experience that can help us improve the program in the future?
- 4) Graduates' employment supervisors:
 - In what ways do you believe UPP grads are better prepared for core competencies than other new employees going through agency core training only?
 - Is there anything additional you would like to share with us about your experiences that can help us improve the program in the future?

d. Campus Coordinator Focus Group

Campus Coordinators are the primary staff of the UPP. Each coordinator functions in multiple capacities and serves as the link among program components. Though their level of involvement and role varies somewhat across universities, campus coordinators are responsible for recruiting students, teaching classes, serving as a liaison with the children services agencies, monitoring student progress, and maintaining the day-to-day activities of the UPP, among other things. Given the importance of campus coordinators to the UPP, the evaluators chose to engage them in a face-to-face group dialogue to more fully explore questions of interest to the evaluation.

Focus Group Questions

Six primary questions served to guide the focus group discussion. These questions covered four areas of focus: overall program purpose, student preparedness, campus coordinator job satisfaction, and suggestions for program improvement. The specific questions were as follows:

- 1) What do you believe are the goals of the Title IV-E training program and how well do you believe the program is meeting these goals?
- 2) Rate and describe how well you believe the title IV-E program is preparing graduates for their starting position in public child welfare using three criteria:
 - a. Overall preparedness of graduates
 - b. Graduates' sense of confidence upon hire
 - c. Graduates' sense of competency upon hire
- 3) What kind of feedback about the program have you received from students and/or graduates of the program?
- 4) How satisfied are you with your job as campus coordinator?
- 5) What, if any, changes to the program need to be made to enhance your ability to serve as a campus coordinator?
- 6) What suggestions for improvement would you offer the child welfare training program?

The group engaged in a comprehensive discussion of each of these questions. The focus group ended with each participant identifying a strength of the program.

Focus Group Processes

At the time of the evaluation there were six campus coordinators covering seven different schools implementing the UPP. Five campus coordinators participated in the focus group, representing all schools except the University of Toledo. The two-hour focus group took place at the beginning of a regularly scheduled meeting of campus coordinators held in Columbus on April 18, 2007, at the Central Ohio Regional Training Center located at Franklin County Children Services.

Campus coordinators were asked to respond to the above focus group questions with the facilitator taking care to avoid influencing responses. To alleviate potential perception of researcher bias in the focus group data collection and

analysis based on Dr. Bronson's administrator role in the program, Dr. Davis facilitated and analyzed the focus group. Therefore, this summary reflects the freely discussed views of the participants. Participants each completed a participant information form and signed a research consent form. The session was audio taped, and a research assistant took notes on a laptop in case of equipment failure.

Focus Group Analysis

The audio taped focus group was transcribed verbatim. Participant comments were then analyzed and organized through content analysis (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). Themes and patterns within the data were identified for each question, resulting in prevailing themes emerging from the focus group. The findings represent the ideas as most widely identified and discussed across campus coordinators. When possible (i.e., when individual participants are not identifiable) themes are supported by verbatim participant comments.

5. Results

a. Electronic surveys

The online survey was completed by graduates of UPP, field instructors for UPP students, and the graduates' first employment supervisors. Table 3 provides the numbers of those responding.

Table 3. Online survey respondents.⁶

Respondent Group	Number completing online survey	Response rate
UPP Graduates	34	23%
UPP Field Instructors	20	19%
Graduates' Employment Supervisors	6	43%

The results will be presented in four sections. The first presents the responses from the UPP graduates, the second focuses on the field instructor responses, the third gives the supervisor answers, and the fourth section presents comparisons between the respondents on similar questions.

⁶ Five field instructors responded to the survey but did not supervise any UPP students during the evaluation period. These responses were eliminated from the analysis. Despite instructions to limit the sample to those who were part of the program for the four years included in the evaluation, it appears that the campus coordinators sent letters and e-mails to all field instructors, including those who were field instructors only in 2006-2007. This has had an unintended adverse effect on the response rate for field instructors.

UPP Graduates

Thirty-four UPP graduates completed the online survey. Tables 4-7 provide a description of the respondents. Table 4 reflects the difficulties of gathering information from those who graduated in the first two cohorts. The class of 2003 was small since this was the year in which the program was piloted at only Ohio State University and the University of Akron. Six schools participated in 2004 and a seventh school graduated a UPP cohort in 2005.

Table 4. Respondents by year of graduation.

Year of Graduation	2003	2004	2005	2006
	1 (3%)	7 (21%)	16 (47%)	10 (29%)

Table 5. Age at graduation, degree, & race of graduate respondents.

Age at graduation (N=34)			Degree (N=34)		Race/Ethnicity (N=33)		
22-23	24-30	>30	BSW	MSW	White	Black	Latino
20	11	3	33	1	31	1	1
59%	32%	9%	97.1%	2.9%	94%	3%	3%

The ages and degrees received by the respondents is consistent with the focus of the UPP program. During the evaluation years only the Ohio State University was allowed to admit up to five MSW students to the UPP program. All of the universities focused on recruiting BSW student to the program. Beginning in 2005, when the \$5000 reimbursement was implemented, each university was allowed to admit up to 11 students. It is unclear whether the race/ethnicity of the respondents is representative of all students participating in UPP.

Table 6. Graduates accepting employment in public child welfare.

Accepted employment in public child welfare agency?	
YES	NO
29 (85.3%)	5 (14.7%)

Table 6 indicates that one of the primary goals of the UPP program was achieved for this group of respondents. Over 85% of them accepted employment in an Ohio public child welfare agency upon graduation. As Table 7 indicates, many of them stayed in the regions and counties in which they did their field practicum. Four of five students who did not accept a job in child welfare indicated that they decided to enter MSW advanced standing programs. The fifth student felt that

the UPP experience was valuable but found child welfare work to be a bit overwhelming and decided to take a job in another field.

Table 7. Counties with UPP field placement students and graduate employees.

Training Region	Number of UPP students in field placements	Number of UPP students hired upon graduation
Northwest Ohio (Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Hancock , Henry, Huron, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Van Wert, Williams, Wood, Wyandot)	2	2
Northeast Ohio (Ashland, Ashtabula, Columbiana, Geauga, Holmes, Lake , Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Portage, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Wayne)	3	3
North Central Ohio (Cuyahoga)	1	1
Western Ohio (Allen, Auglaize, Champaign, Clark, Darke, Greene, Hardin, Logan, Mercer, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, Shelby)	8	6
Southwestern Ohio (Adams, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton, Highland, Warren)	5	7
Central Ohio (Craw, Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Knox, Licking, Madison, Marion, Pickaway, Richland, Union)	12	9
Southeast Ohio (Athens, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs , Morgan, Perry, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Vinton, Washington)	3	1
East Central Ohio (Belmont, Carroll, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Jefferson, Monroe , Muskingum, Noble, Tuscarawas)	0	0

Graduates who took employment in a public child welfare agency.

The students who decided to take a position in a public child welfare agency did so for many reasons. Table 8 summarizes their responses to the question “Please describe the primary reasons for your decision to accept a position with public child welfare services.” Participants could offer up to five reasons. The table lists the answers by the frequency with which they mentioned by the graduates. Judging from the top two reasons given, UPP graduates were motivated by the UPP reimbursement offered for taking a job in child welfare and their overall desire to work with children and families.

Table 8. Graduates - Primary reasons for decision to accept position with public child welfare agency.

Improvement Category	# Respondents/ # Suggestions	Summary of Suggestions
<i>Tuition Reimbursement</i>	(n=14)	This category includes direct statements of tuition reimbursement or incentives received from participating in UPP
<i>Interest in Child Welfare/Children and Family Services</i>	(n=13)	Graduates indicated a variety of related responses, including specific interest and passion in working within the field of child welfare, working with children and families, the challenging and meaningful nature of child welfare work, and that child welfare work was a specific career goal
<i>Job Benefits</i>	(n=9)	Graduates identified general job “benefits” and more specifically, pay, job security, flexibility, health benefits, and potential for upward mobility
<i>The Job</i>	(n=18)	Four specific areas of focus were identified for this category, including attaining job/work experience; job offer or convenience of accepting the job; feeling prepared for the job; and the job as the best with the degree
<i>Enjoyed Practicum/Completed Field Placement</i>	(n=7)	This category represents responses where graduates indicated that their field placement experience influenced their decision. Several specifically indicated enjoyment of the practicum or a supportive field instructor
<i>Location</i>	(n=2)	Two graduates specified location as a reason
<i>Other</i>	(n=6)	Additional responses included staff, networking, completing the UPP program requirements, familiarity with agency, and a wider demographic of clientele
<i>No Response</i>	(n=1)	

Note: See Appendix H for the detailed analysis.

When graduates were asked if they would recommend the UPP to other social work students, 93.1% (n=27) of those who took jobs in child welfare indicated that they would recommend the program. Two graduates indicated they would not recommend the program. One was unhappy at not receiving even half of the promised tuition reimbursement due to changes in how the reimbursement amount was calculated in the second year of the program and the other felt that the “program added additional demands to an already hectic school/internship schedule.”

The UPP graduates were asked to rate their sense of preparedness for working in a public child welfare agency. Their answers are shown in Figure 1. They

were also asked to describe what aspects of curriculum/program most contributed to their preparedness. Their answers are in Table 9.

Figure 1. Graduates' sense of preparedness.

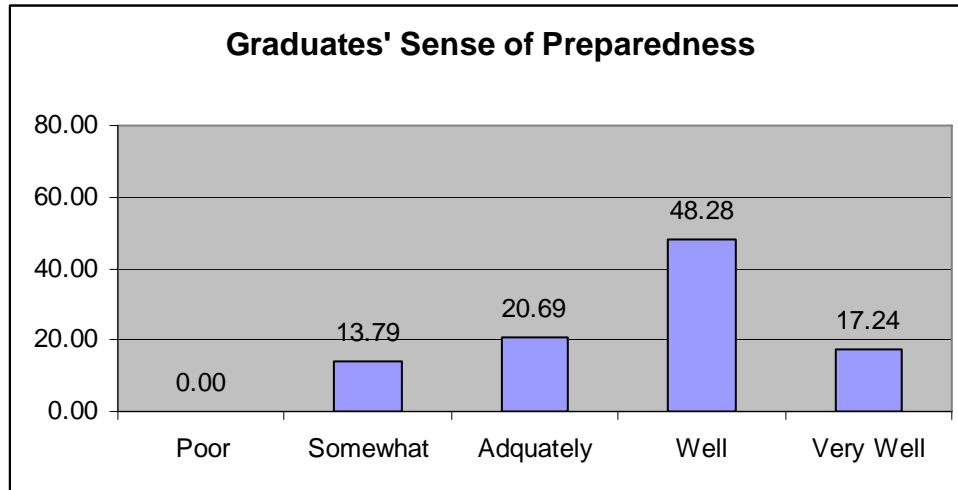


Table 9. Graduates - Aspects of curriculum/program most contributing to preparedness.

Curriculum/Program Category	# Respondents
Field Practicum	(n=26)
Child welfare classes and core training	(n=17)
Seminar	(n=5)
Social work classes (child development, strengths-based, cultural diversity, policy)	(n=5)
People/Program Personnel (campus coordinator, teachers, mentors, advisor)	(n=9)
Other program aspects (e.g., courtroom experience, agency documentation, group exercises, interviewing)	(n=6)

Note: See Appendix G for the detailed analysis.

An important part of the UPP training is to prepare students for careers in public child welfare. The survey asked the graduates to rate their confidence and competence in the job during their first three months of employment and after three months. Figures 2 and 3 show how the graduates rated themselves on these two measures.

Figure 2. UPP Graduates' sense of confidence.

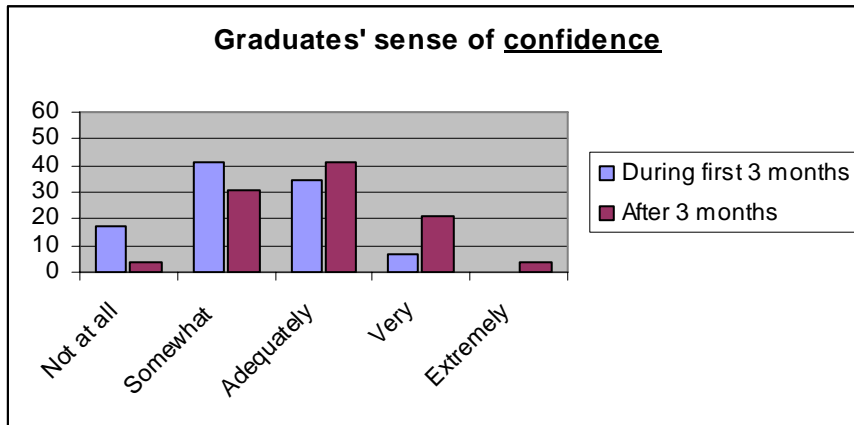
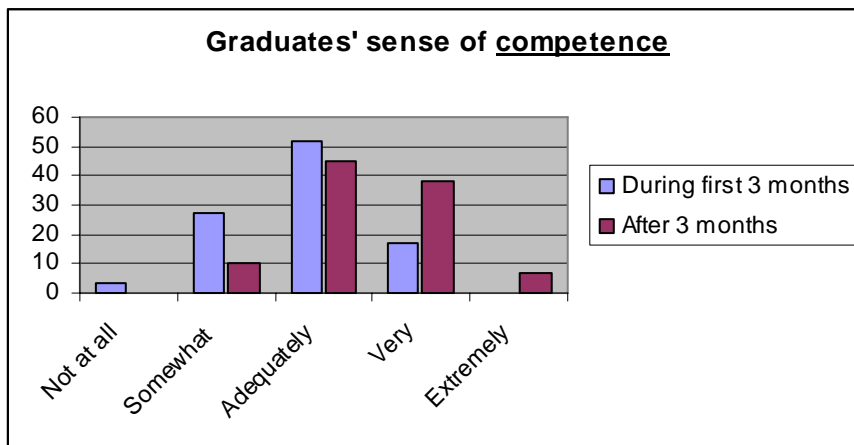


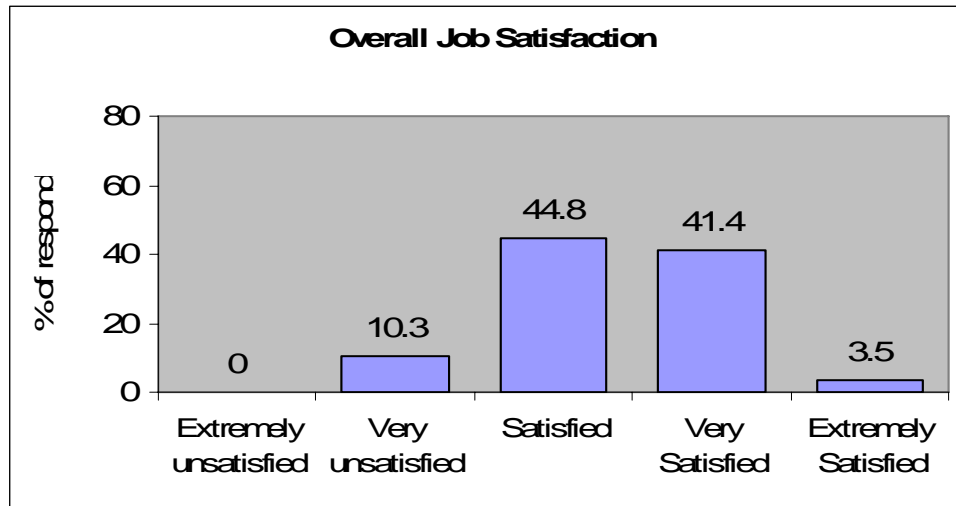
Figure 3. Graduates' sense of competence.



In both cases, graduates increased their sense of competence and confidence after three months employment.

Graduates who took positions in child welfare were also asked a series of questions about their job satisfaction. Figure 4 shows their overall level of job satisfaction. Nearly 90% of the graduates in child welfare positions report being satisfied to extremely satisfied with their jobs.

Figure 4. Overall job satisfaction for UPP graduates in child welfare positions.



Graduates were also asked how the supervision they receive in their jobs has influenced their job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. This question generated a number of lengthy responses (Table 10), all of which reflect the importance of the supervisory relationship on the graduates' job satisfaction. Without a doubt, supervision affects graduates' satisfaction with their jobs. Graduates clearly stated that poor supervision contributed to dissatisfaction and good/involved supervision contributed to greater satisfaction. Several graduates attributed satisfaction with supervision to their reasons for staying in their jobs.

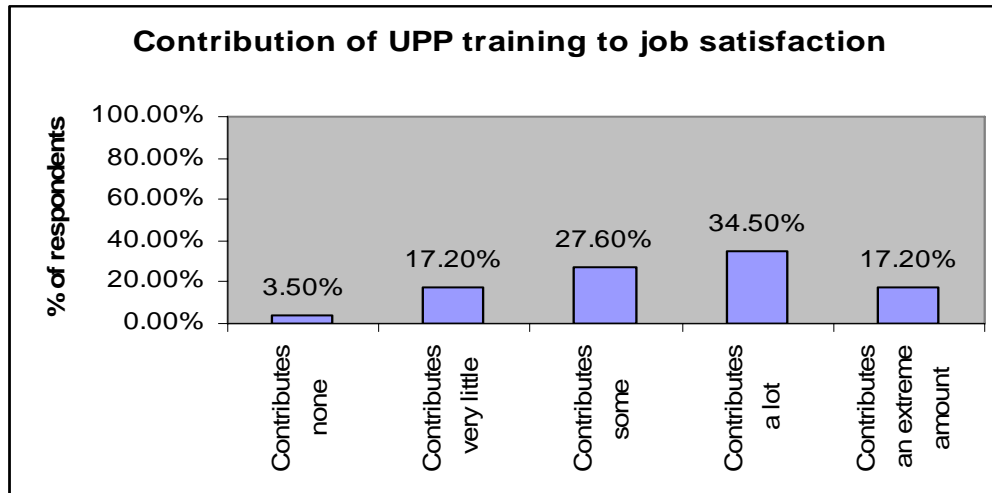
Table 10. Graduate responses: How has the supervision you received since hire contributed to your job satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

Response Category	# Respondents	Sample Responses
Contributed to Satisfaction	(n=13)	Examples of contributions include, “open door policy”; “able to talk to my supervisor more often about my cases”; “supervisor who would support me”; “supervision...is great and aids in my understanding of the job requirements” ; “stands up for her workers...is knowledgeable...provides insight”; “both [supervisors] have shown great compassion and enthusiasm for the work”; “supervisor is really the reason I stayed and decided to take the job”
Contributed to Dissatisfaction	(n=7)	Examples of dissatisfaction include, “did not receive adequate supervision”; “lack of meaningful supervision”; one respondent indicating a lack of presence of supervisor in the office; “supervisor...appears to not be involved/ interested with issues that arise”; “supervisors should be more supporting of their staff”; “I have been over supervised and not allowed to complete tasks...other times I have little to no supervision”
Mixed Response	(n=6)	Four graduates indicated initial dissatisfaction but with change in supervisor/supervisory relationship satisfaction job increased. One respondent indicated having had a mix of “competent” and “incompetent” supervisors, and another indicated “while my level of supervision is overall good, supervision itself, or the lack thereof, can sometimes be the most frustrating/ unsatisfying aspect of the job.”
Contribution Unclear	(n=3)	Examples of comments include, “there are different supervision styles...you have to be flexible at all times in this job”; “supervision is not an issue”

Note: Some comments edited to ensure protection of participant identity.

Graduates were also asked how much their experience in the UPP Title IV-E education program has contributed to their current level of job satisfaction. As Figure 5 shows, responses to this question were more varied.

Figure 5. Contribution of UPP training to job satisfaction.



When asked to explain their ratings, the graduates offered several explanations. These are summarized in Table 11.

Table 11. Graduates: Explanation for how experience in the program positively contributes to current job satisfaction.

Response Category	# Respondents	Summary of Responses
Positive influence of program on job satisfaction	(n=15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus coordinator support (n=2) • Prepared worker for how to do the work (n=6) • Prepared worker for expectations for child welfare work (n=5) • Informed employment decision-making (n=1) • Increased comfort, confidence, knowledge; worker felt less lost at start (n=2) • Connection with professionals in time of need (n=1) • Tuition reimbursement (n=1)
Other responses	(n=8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not or did little to prepare (n=3) • Materials were outdated (n=1) • Prepared workers but found child welfare not a good fit/low agency support (n=2) • Used learning from program, but found child welfare focused more on paperwork and procedures (n=1) • Contributed more at first but couldn't currently recall class learning (n=1)
No response	(n=6)	

To further explore the factors contributing to the graduates' satisfaction with their jobs, they were asked to indicate how much the culture of the public child welfare

agency influenced their job satisfaction. Their answers are presented in Figure 6. Their explanations for the ratings are in Table 12.

Figure 6. Influence of agency culture on job satisfaction.

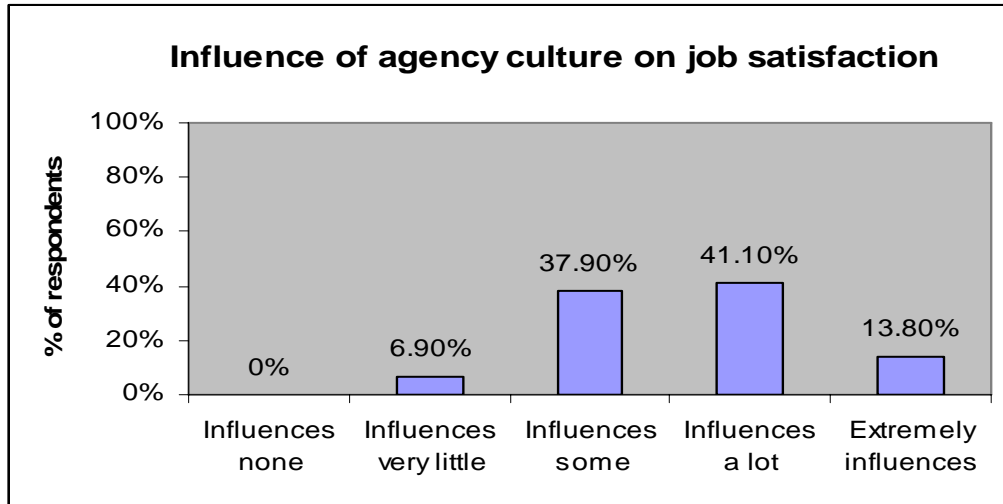


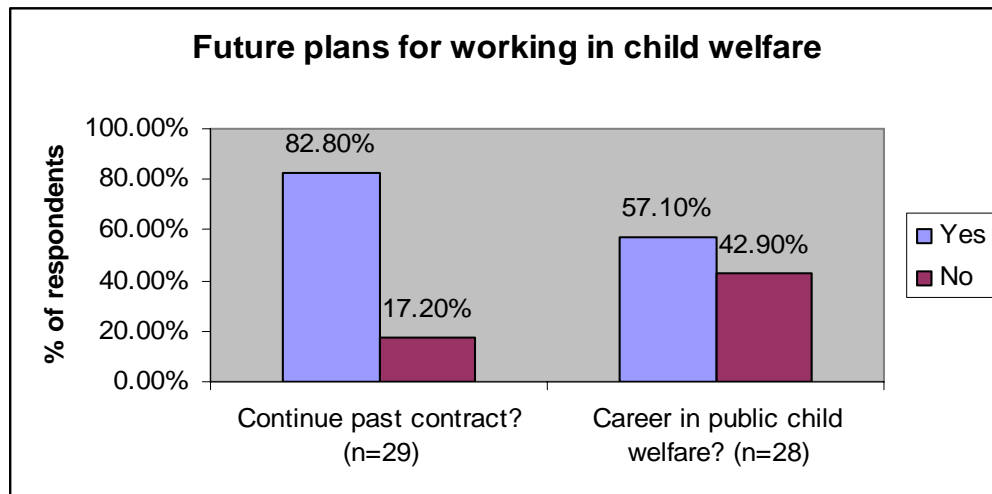
Table 12. Graduates: Explanation for how the culture of public child welfare agency influences job satisfaction.

Response Category	# Respondents	Summary of Responses
Positive influence of agency culture of agency on satisfaction	(n=4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Team...like a family”; shared feedback (n=3) • Rural workplace is “comfortable and less business-like” (n-1)
Negative influence of culture of agency on satisfaction	(n=7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are often negative (n=1) • Attitudes/culture contribute to dissatisfaction (n=2) • Pressure due to overwork, deadlines, paperwork; worker burnout (n=3) • Negative public perception of caseworkers (n=1) • Caseworker strengths are not rewarded (n=1) • Bureaucratic culture is challenging (n=1)
Mixed influence	(n=3)	Pressure and work on caseworkers... “incompetence in the field” ... “There are good days on the job...but a lot of the time it feels a lot like you are banging your head against a brick wall”; awareness of culture, but still able to focus on doing job; “public agencies suffer from high turnover, employee dissatisfaction, and low salaries” but worker tries not to let negativity affect work...has felt supported by supervisors and peers
Other (Unclear understanding of question/ response)	(n=6)	Examples of responses include discussion of geographic culture, populations served by child welfare, relating well to client cultures, and general acknowledgement that agency culture influences work
No response	(n=9)	

Note: Some comments edited to ensure protection of participant identity.

The UPP graduates were asked if they planned to continue working in public child welfare beyond their contractual commitment and whether they planned to pursue a career in public child welfare. The responses appear in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Future work plans.



These numbers suggest that nearly 60% of the UPP graduates who are currently employed by an Ohio public child welfare agency intend to make a career in this type of work.

Finally, the graduates were asked to share their suggestions for ways to improve the UPP program. They were given the opportunity to list up to seven suggestions. Table 13 categorizes the suggestions into seven categories.

Table 13. Suggestions for improving UPP from graduates employed in public child welfare.

Improvement Category	# Respondents/ # Suggestions	Summary of Suggestions
<i>Existing Curriculum</i>	(n=10) 15 suggestions	Increase the amount of agency-specific learning, including more focus on paperwork; increase focus on emotional and stress factors related to child welfare work; update materials and increase emphasis on hands-on and real case learning, including increased scope of risk assessment and case planning
<i>Additional Learning Opportunities</i>	(n=8) 16 suggestions	A number of suggestions related to increasing student preparation for involvement with the courts and legal system; several suggested content be included on substance abuse and mental health issues; two suggestions for increasing exposure to available community-based resources; other suggestions included more focus on working with involuntary clients, agency culture, and the multiple aspects of child welfare services, and making more experiences available for macro agency involvement and urban vs. rural agency involvement
<i>Mentoring</i>	(n=3) 4 suggestions	Field instructors should be provided more time, training, and supervision related to their mentoring of students. Graduates of UPP could serve as peer mentors for current students.
<i>Program Design</i>	(n=6) 8 suggestions	Contrasting suggestions related to required meetings with campus coordinator and seminars with most indicating a need for reducing the number of meetings and one suggested an increase. Other suggested related advancing the timing of several program elements, i.e., SACWIS, CAPMIS, risk assessment, case planning, and field placement. Other suggestions included increasing the number of UPP participants, and more consideration given to field placement experience at time of hire
<i>Program Personnel</i>	(n=3) 4 suggestions	Graduates expressed needs for program administrators and instructors to have recent child welfare experience and for other professors to support student participation in the UPP.
<i>Program Incentives</i>	(n=6) 6 suggestions	Suggestions were related to improving student incentives for participation in the program (e.g., amounts, follow-through, better incentives, reimbursement for part-time employees)
<i>Administrative</i>	(n=3) 8 suggestions	Increase perceived value of program at universities and agencies; ensure regular visits to the agency; ensure agency understanding of UPP meeting requirements of CORE training and reimbursement agreement

Note: See Appendix F for the detailed analysis.

Graduates who did not take employment in a public child welfare agency.

Five students chose not to accept a job in public child welfare after graduating. Four decided to continue their education in an MSW program and one decided that she was not suited to child welfare. She took a job in another field. When asked if the culture of the public child welfare agency influenced their decision, three of the five indicated that the heavy workload did influence their decision to forego the UPP reimbursement and chose to continue in school or change fields. One of the respondents wrote, "Working at the child welfare agency was pretty intense. I loved making relationships with the kids, but did not enjoy making home visits to families which did not want to cooperate with me...I didn't know if I wanted that type of daily stress, as much as I know kids need our help."

Despite not taking jobs in child welfare, four of the participants indicated that their experiences in UPP have helped them in their current positions. One noted that she learned to be more flexible and another said that she learned to think on her feet in diverse situations. Still another is providing services to children and families. She wrote, "I now do home visiting with kids 0-3 who have delays/disabilities...Having some home/school visiting experience helped. Doing case plans helped me now that I am writing Individualized Family Service Plans. Also, I had a lot of training about things like abuse/neglect, child development, safety, etc. which helped for my position."

Finally, these graduates were asked if they had any suggestions for improving UPP. They offered:

- An opportunity to work and continue education
- Place more than one student at the same agency so that they can make joint visits if needed and so that they can help each other learn.

UPP Field Instructors

Thirty-one field instructors responded to the invitation to complete the online survey. Five were former UPP graduates and were instructed to complete only the Graduate Survey. One did not consent and exited the survey, and five others had not supervised UPP students during the evaluation period. As a result, the responses of 20 field instructors are included in this analysis.

The field instructors included in the analysis came from 10 different counties in Ohio. Eight were from Franklin county, four from Lucas, and one field instructor from the remaining eight counties (Crawford, Clark, Warren, Butler, Delaware, Greene, Montgomery, and Athens). Table 14 indicates the number of UPP students supervised by these field instructors for each of the first four years of the UPP program.

Table 14. Number of students supervised per year.

2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
5	11	18	23

Most of the field instructors have masters degrees (n=17) while two had bachelors degrees and one is in the process of acquiring a masters degree. Fifteen of the respondents had degrees in social work, two had degrees in counseling, one has a degree in public health, and one has a degree in sociology. Two of the respondents were African-American and the others White.

The field instructors were asked to indicate how much various components of the UPP program contributed to the overall preparedness of the students for child welfare work. Table 15 provides a summary of their responses.

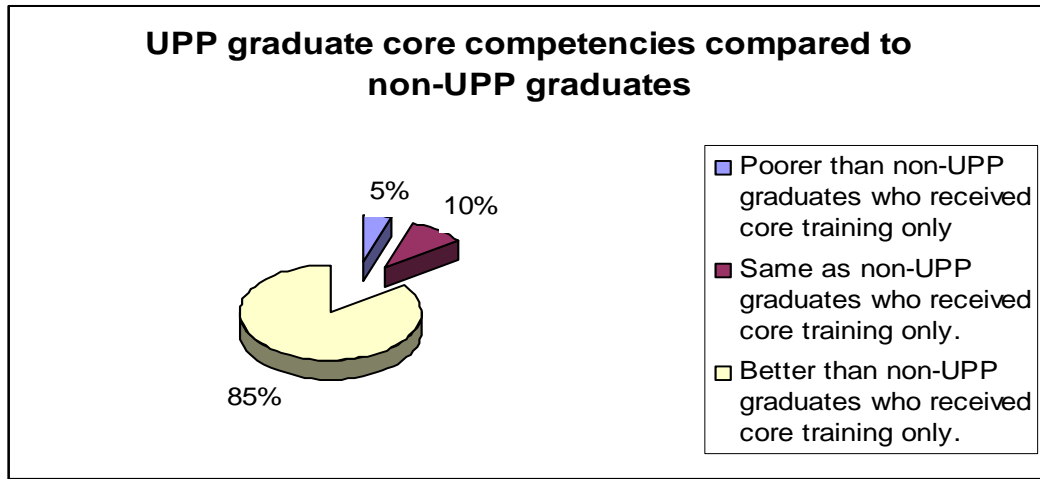
Table 15. Extent to which UPP program components contribute to student readiness (1=contributed none, 2=contributed very little, 3=contributed some, 4=contributed a lot, 5=contributed an extreme amount)

	Child Welfare I Course	Child Welfare II Course	Specialized Seminar	Contact with Campus Coordinator	Field Practicum in a Public Child Welfare Agency
Mean	3.63	3.63	3.56	3.95	4.30
Standard Deviation	0.68	0.68	0.63	0.78	0.66
N=	19	19	16	19	20
Min	2	2	2	3	3
Max	5	5	4	5	5

The field instructors clearly believe that the field practicum experience contributes the most to the overall preparedness of the UPP students. Several people chose not to rate the contribution of the specialized seminars. It is possible that the field instructors are less familiar with the content of the seminars than they are with the other components of the program.

The field instructors were also asked to answer the question “How would you rate UPP students at the point of graduation in terms of their core competency levels?” Figure 8 presents their responses.

Figure 8. Comparison of UPP to non-UPP graduates on core competencies.



The field instructors' ratings of the graduates' preparedness for child welfare work and their sense of the graduates' confidence and competence are presented in Figures 9, 10, and 11, respectively. In all three categories, the field instructors rate the graduates quite highly.

Figure 9. Field instructor rating of UPP graduate preparedness.

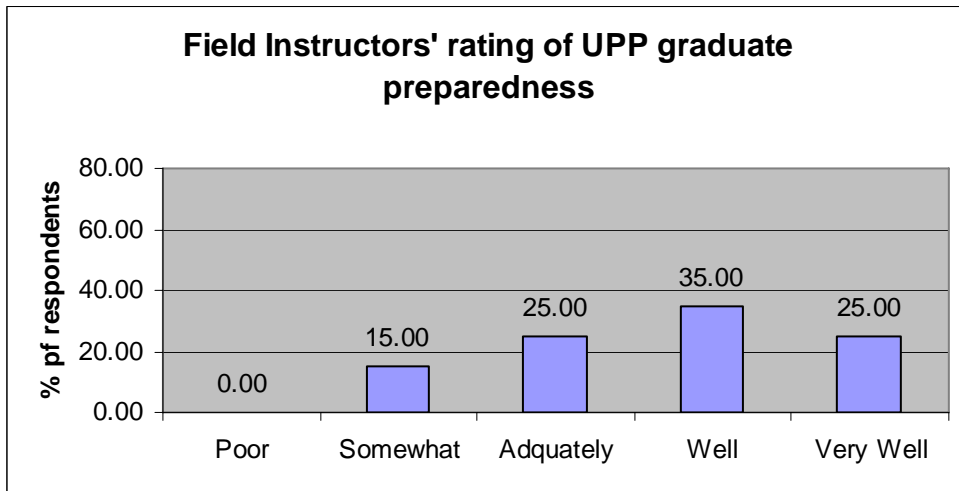


Figure 10. Field instructors' sense of UPP graduates' confidence.

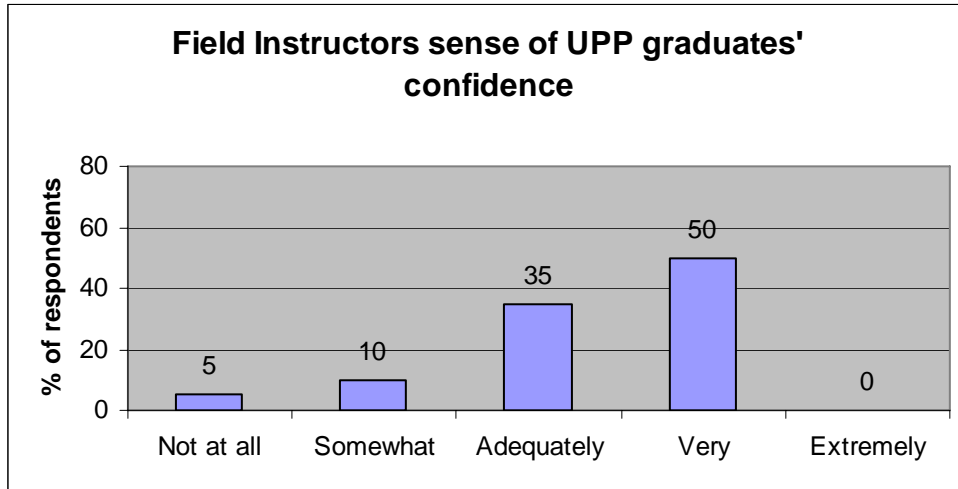
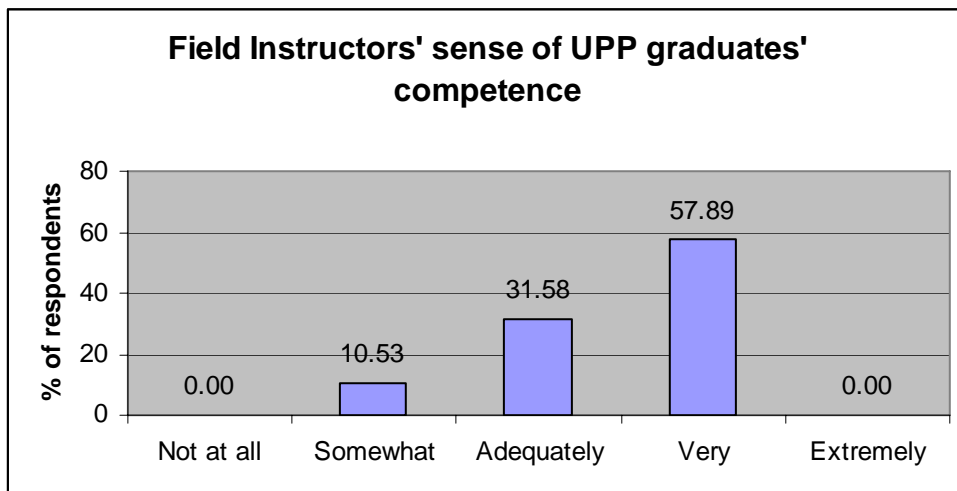


Figure 11. Field instructors' sense of UPP graduates' competence.



All field instructors reported being satisfied to extremely satisfied with their participation in the UPP program and they were unanimous in saying they would recommend the program to other social work students and that they would recommend that their colleagues participate in the program. There were numerous reasons for their satisfaction as can be seen in Table 16.

Table 16. Field instructor explanation for satisfaction with involvement in UPP.

Response Category	# Respondents	Responses
Positive Contributions	(n=7)	Students are well/better prepared than workers not participating in UPP
	(n=4)	Good relationship with campus coordinator and/or partnership between university and agency
	(n=3)	Appreciate interaction with other supervisors of interns
	(n=3)	Feel good about supervising interns/graduates
Negative Contributions	(n=2)	Field placement evaluation is too academic
	(n=1)	Some students have maturity issues
No response	(n=5)	

Note: Some comments paraphrased or edited to ensure protection of participant identity.

Finally, the field instructors were asked if they had any suggestions for improving UPP in the future. Their answers are summarized in Table 17.

Table 17. Field instructors - Suggestions for improvement.

Improvement Category	# Respondents/ # Suggestions	Summary of Suggestions
<i>Field Instructor Training</i>	(n=3) 6 suggestions	A variety of training needs were identified, including training to get more people to supervise, linking course curriculum to practice, training about general UPP program information, and increased interaction with supervisors
<i>Evaluation Tie to Placement</i>	(n=3) 3 suggestions	Respondents all indicated a need for the field practicum evaluation to be revised to better tie the content and language to the work students are doing in child welfare
<i>Other</i>	(n=6) 6 suggestions	Suggestions in this category included tying class and job paperwork together; extending UPP status to allow for graduate school; increased flexibility in student schedules; field closure sessions; criminal background checks; and gate-keeping problem students
<i>No Suggestions</i>	(n=11)	

Note: Some comments paraphrased or edited to ensure protection of participant identity.

Graduates' First Employment Supervisors

The final stage in the UPP program is for the graduates to accept employment in an Ohio public child welfare agency. To assess their preparation for their first job in child welfare it is important to learn how the graduates first supervisors view their job performance. Graduate were asked to provide the names and e-mail addresses of their first employment supervisors if they were willing to have their supervisors participate in the evaluation. Thirteen graduates (45%) provided

contact information on their supervisors. One supervisor is also a campus coordinator for one university and was removed from the list. E-mails were sent to twelve supervisors and six (50%) completed the online survey.

The employment supervisors came from five Ohio counties. Two supervisors had bachelor's degrees, three had master's degrees, and one is working on a master's degree. Three supervisors held degrees in social work, one in education, one in behavioral science, and one in sociology/criminal justice. All were white. Five supervisors had worked with at least one UPP graduate and one had supervised three graduates.

The supervisors were asked to assess the UPP graduates on several measures:

- Overall preparedness for the job (Table 18) ,
- The supervisor's sense of the student's confidence and competence upon hire (Tables 19 & 20),
- How the UPP graduates compared to non-UPP in terms of the core competency skills (Table 21),
- The amount of supervision needed by UPP graduates compared to non-UPP graduates (Table 22), and
- The supervisor's overall satisfaction with the UPP graduates (Table 23).

Table 18. Overall preparedness for the job.

	Response percent	Response count
Poorly prepared	0	0
Somewhat prepared	16.7	1
Adequately prepared	16.7	1
Well Prepared	66.7	4
Very well prepared	0	0

Table 19. Supervisors' sense of graduates' confidence upon hire.

	Response percent	Response count
Not at all confident	16.7	1
Somewhat confident	0	0
Adequately confident	33.3	2
Very confident	50.0	3
Extremely confident	0	0

Table 20. Supervisors' sense of graduates' competence upon hire.

	Response percent	Response count
Not at all competent	16.7	1
Somewhat competent	0	0
Adequately competent	33.3	2
Very competent	50.0	3
Extremely competent	0	0

Table 21. UPP graduates compared to non-UPP hires in terms of core competency skills.

	Response percent	Response count
Poorer than non-UPP graduates who received core training only.	0	0
Same as non-UPP graduates who received core training only	16.7	1
Better than non-UPP graduates who received core training only	83.3	5

Table 22. Supervision needed by UPP graduates compared to non-UPP graduates.

	Response percent	Response count
More than non-UPP graduates who received core training only.	16.7	1
Same as non-UPP graduates who received core training only	16.7	1
Less than non-UPP graduates who received core training only	66.7	4

Table 23. Supervisors' overall satisfaction with UPP graduates.

	Response percent	Response count
Extremely unsatisfied	0	0
Very unsatisfied	0	0
Satisfied	33.3	2
Very satisfied	16.7	1
Extremely satisfied	50.0	3

It is clear from these tables that the employment supervisors were quite pleased with the UPP graduates who were hired by their agencies. Based on these responses, it is not surprising that all six supervisors said that they would recommend that their agencies hire other UPP graduates.

Comparisons between Graduate, Field Instructor, and Supervisor Responses on Preparation, Confidence and Competence

On the Graduate, Field Instructor, and Supervisor surveys the respondents were asked to rate the UPP graduates preparedness for the job, their confidence, and their competence in child welfare work. Figures 12 to 14 present a graphical representation of the percentage of respondents in each group who selected each of the five ratings.

Interestingly, the students rated themselves lower on all three measures. While UPP graduates generally felt prepared for the job, they expressed much lower levels of confidence and competence than their field instructors or employment supervisors. Tables 24, 25, and 26 provide the mean scores for the graduates, field instructors, and supervisors on preparedness, confidence, and competence, respectively.

Table 24. Preparedness of UPP graduates.

Preparedness	% Graduates	% Field Instructors	% Employment Supervisors
Poor	0.00	0	0.00
Somewhat	13.79	15.0	16.67
Adquately	20.69	25.0	16.67
Well	48.28	35.0	66.67
Very Well	17.24	25.0	0.00

Figure 12. Graduates, field instructors, & supervisors' ratings on preparedness.

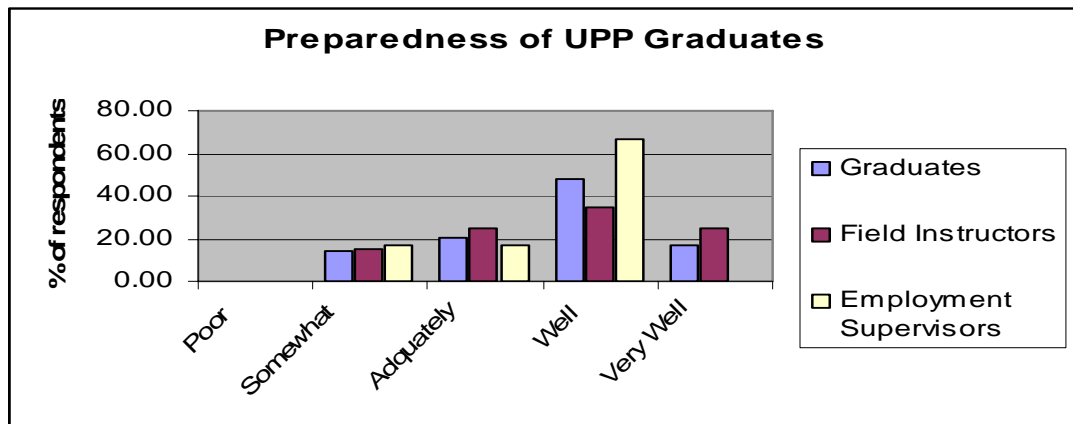


Table 25. Confidence of UPP graduates.

Confidence	% Graduates	% Field Instructors	% Employment Supervisors
Not at all	17.2	5.0	16.7
Somewhat	41.4	10.0	0
Adequately	34.5	35.0	33.3
Very	6.9	50.0	50.0
Extremely	0	0	0

Figure 13. UPP graduate confidence at graduation.

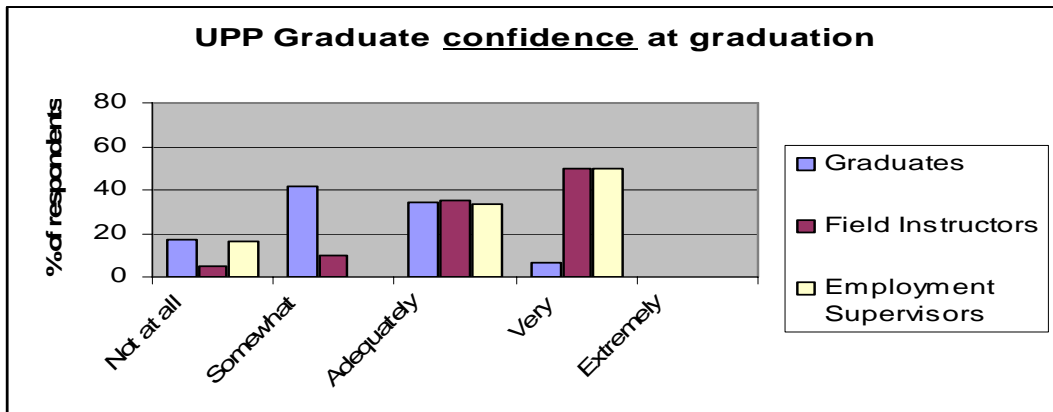
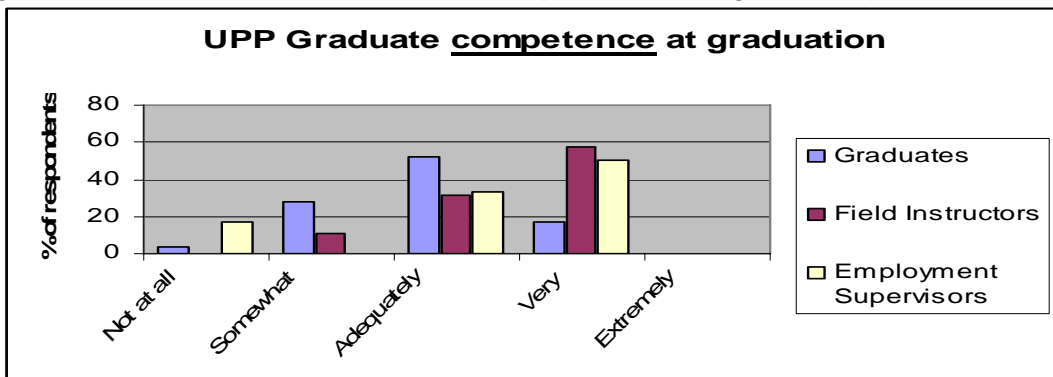


Table 26. Competence of UPP graduates.

Competence	% Graduates	% Field Instructors	% Employment Supervisors
Not at all	3.4	0.00	16.7
Somewhat	27.6	10.53	0
Adequately	51.7	31.58	33.3
Very	17.2	57.89	50.0
Extremely	0	0.00	0

Figure 14. Graduates', field instructors, & supervisors' ratings on competence.



b. Telephone interviews

Follow-up telephone interviews were conducted with those who indicated a willingness to participate. Table 27 summarizes the number of e-mails sent requesting a follow-up interview and the number respondents from each group that actually completed an interview.

Table 27. Number of participants in follow-up telephone interviews.

	E-mail requests to schedule a phone interview	Number of interviews completed (%)
UPP Graduates	18	7 (38%)
Field Instructors	14	4 (29%)
Graduates' Employment Supervisors	5	1 (20%)

UPP Graduates

Graduates who accepted employment in a child welfare agency (n=4):

Four of the graduates who were interviewed took jobs in public child welfare when they graduated. One was an MSW graduate and the others obtained their BSW degrees.

- 1) Would you have continued on to obtain your MSW directly after graduating with your BSSW if you could have delayed your contractual work obligation to the UPP program until completion of your MSW (asked of three BSW graduates only)?
 - Two of the three students who took jobs in public child welfare after receiving their BSW degrees indicated that they would have welcomed the opportunity to pursue their MSW degrees and delay their contractual work obligation. One said that she would have “taken the MSW option in a heartbeat” and is now beginning the MSW on a part-time basis while she continues to work. The other graduate started working in order to get the UPP reimbursement and completed her MSW as a part-time student while she worked in child welfare. The third did not offer an explanation of why she would not have continued on for an MSW if the option had been available.

- 2) a. In what ways did you feel best prepared for your first job in child welfare services?
 - Two of the interviewees commented on the value of their UPP field placement experiences in child welfare in terms of how they learned to deal with clients. One felt this was the most important part of the field experience.

- One student noted that because of UPP she felt more secure in her job and knew what the expectations were. Another noted that her employment supervisor had more confidence in her skills and that she felt more competent to deal with the agency paperwork.
- One student participated in the CAPMIS pilot program. She took this knowledge to a county that was just beginning to implement CAPMIS and this gave her something beneficial to offer her new employing agency.

b. What suggestions would you have for improving the program in this regard?

A number of suggestions were offered by the interviewees to better prepare students for their employment in public child welfare. These included:

- Make child welfare classes more practical and relevant to the field today by spending more time on substantive issues such as substance abuse and domestic violence.
- Offer more opportunities in the field practicum such as serving on agency committees and shadowing workers early in the field experience.
- Provide more information on the legal aspects of child welfare (i.e., testifying, going to court, building a case). Consider bringing in a magistrate from Family Court to discuss legal issues.

3) a. In what ways did you feel least prepared for your first job in child welfare services?

The four interviewees had some very specific areas in which they felt unprepared for child welfare practice. These were:

- Three graduates felt that they lacked knowledge about the practical and logistical aspects of child welfare work such as using the computer system, SACWIS, completing forms, time management, and dealing with paperwork.
- Three interviewees stressed their lack of preparedness for dealing with other systems such as the schools and courts. Two respondents were especially concerned about the legal aspects of their jobs, i.e., court procedures, testimony, and building a case.
- One interviewee felt unprepared to connect with available resources in the community, especially when rural caseworkers must access services in the cities.

b. What suggestions would you have for improving the program in this regard?

Several specific suggestions were offered to address these limitations of the UPP educational program.

- Two graduates suggested bringing in people from other systems (e.g., MRDD and courts) to present in the child welfare course. One suggested asking a magistrate from Family Court to talk to the class.

- Others (n=3) suggested that students receive practical training on time management, how to use the computer system, SACWIS, and how to complete agency forms. One interviewee thought this might be done by have students shadow workers earlier in their field practicum experiences. And another thought that having more practical information might reduce some of the stressors associated with child welfare work.
 - One respondent wanted the child welfare classes to include more information on the most recent research in child welfare.
- 4) What specific courses and/or aspects of the courses most contributed to your preparedness for your first job in public child welfare?

Only one of the interviewees was able to describe specific aspects of the courses that most contributed to their preparedness. She found the marriage and family clinical course to be especially helpful, as well as the clinical courses that provided content on a strengths-based and solution-focused approaches to services. She reported that she felt challenged by the clinical courses and felt they benefited her.

- 5) Should the UPP program include content in the following areas:
- Emotional/mental health aspects of child welfare work?
 - Three of four respondents thought this content should be included in the UPP program. One noted that stress is “an every day thing” in child welfare. Another focused on the difficulties of the agency culture, office dynamics, and interpersonal conflicts among the workers. And one other noted that “child welfare workers are overworked... sometimes they can’t get to everything...can’t let things get to you.” The fourth interviewee thought that UPP graduates got enough information on this topic during the field practicum. She suggested adding more content on the mental health and emotional impacts of placement on children.
 - Child welfare agency culture
 - Three of four interviewees thought that culture differed so much from one agency to another that it would be difficult to address in UPP and they would not suggest adding it. One of them thought that more information on how to deal with agency culture in terms of handling conflicts and office dynamics would be useful.
 - Legal issues and/or preparation for court involvement
 - All four interviewees strongly supported the idea of adding more content on legal issues and preparing for court. One person said, “Yes, definitely. We had very little preparation in this regard. Classes should include mock trials; people should be prepared to testify; prepare a case for permanent custody. It is so important from the first day on the job that you know what information to gather and testify to.” Another suggested bringing in people from the legal department to talk to the classes or seminars.
 - Case management and case planning
 - All four interviewees felt well prepared in case management and planning, yet three still felt that more could be offered. One noted that

students need more content on “researching and writing meaningful interventions” and case plans. She added that students need to learn how to justify their case plans.

- Risk assessment
 - All four interviewees thought that risk assessment was adequately covered. Two noted that the state is moving to a safety assessment model with CAPMIS and that students should be trained on that model, including the history of risk/safety assessment.
- 6) Is there anything additional you would like to share with us about your experience that can help us improve the program in the future?
- Two graduates suggested adding more practical and realistic information on child welfare practice by bringing more professionals into the classroom to present.
 - One graduate was upset at not receiving the reimbursement that was promised upon entering the UPP program.
 - One graduate emphasized the importance of continuing the funding for UPP students.
 - One suggested recruiting more UPP graduates to serve as field instructors for UPP students.
 - One suggested using more rural counties and adding more MSW students.
 - One suggested that the child welfare courses should include more information on how to complete paperwork and how to write good records. The courses should also help students do some self-exploration of where they are as individuals so that they don't carry “baggage” into their work with clients.

Graduates who did not accept employment in a child welfare agency (n=3):

Three of the graduates who did not take jobs in public child welfare after receiving the BSW degrees were interviewed. One chose to begin a social work graduate program and the others accepted jobs in non-child welfare fields. Both graduates who took non-child welfare jobs moved out of Ohio after graduation.

- 1) Would you have taken a child welfare position after obtaining your MSW if that option had been available to you to fulfill the requirements of the UPP program?
- All three said that they wish they had had the option to delay their work obligation to pursue an MSW degree. Two of the interviewees said that having the option might not have changed their decision to take other jobs but one made a point to say that she would have used the option if it had been offered. All agreed that adding this option would be good for the UPP program.
- 2) Is there anything additional you would like to share with us about your experience that can help us improve the program in the future?

The interviewees offered several suggestions for improving UPP. These are:

- Consider having at least two students in an agency to provide support for each other
- Two people recommended continuing the weekly small group meetings; they were helpful.

Field Instructors

Four field instructors participated in the follow-up interviews. Their answers to the following four questions are presented.

- 1) What kinds of supports can be offered to agency field instructors to ensure students get the best educational experience?

Three of the field instructors felt very supported and did not offer suggestions for additional supports. They noted that they participate in regular meetings that provide informational content and CEU credit and one mentioned receiving e-mails with information on the content presented in the two child welfare courses. One of the instructors also noted that there are many benefits to having a student in the unit. For example, having an extra person takes some of the load off other workers.

One field instructor, however, thought that there should be more contact and dialogue with the campus coordinator, more linkages to what is going on in the classroom, and more direct involvement. Another suggested that new field instructors may feel incompetent in that role and might need more support. She also thought it would be helpful to have clearer guidelines on what is expected of a field instructor.

- 2) In what ways do the following factors contribute to effective field instruction:

- a. Years of child welfare experience

- Three of the four field instructors thought that a person's years of experience in child welfare was critical to being an effective field instructor. One thought that the more years the person has, the better and stated that 3-5 years of experience should be a minimum requirement. Another said this factor was very critical, adding that a field instructor with experience knows how to deal with the system and the stress of the job. An experienced worker can also model the passion for working in child welfare and point out the good aspects of the job. Two field instructors added that while experience is important, too many years in the field can also be a drawback in that lots of years on the job can lead to cynicism or hardness.

- b. Field of degree
There were differing opinions on the importance of the field in which the field instructor has a degree. One thought that having a degree in social work was essential and provided knowledge about the latest research and trends in the field. One thought it was “helpful” especially when supervising social work students, and one field instructor thought that experience was more important. One was unable to offer an opinion.
 - c. Level of degree (bachelors, master’s)
Three of the four field instructors did not think this was especially important. The third thought that having a master’s degree might help the student deal with the stress of attending a university and they the field instructor might offer tips on graduate school.
 - d. Number of students supervised concurrently
None of the field instructors has supervised more than one student at a time. Three instructors thought that the number should be limited to 1 or 2 students. The third did not think the actual number mattered as much as other responsibilities of the field instructor. UPP should take into account how many other people the person supervises, how many other projects they are involved with, and what the entire picture looks like.
- 3) Field instructors rated students as more confident and competent than students rated themselves on the surveys. What insights can you offer to this finding?

All four field instructors thought that this finding was intriguing and offered a number of possible explanations for the differences. One field instructor said there is a belief in the field that “you don’t know what you’re doing until you’ve done it for a year.” She thought that even though the UPP students knew what to expect and how things work in child welfare, they were still likely to find the first year stressful and overwhelming. That might account for their lower ratings on confidence and competence. Another instructor thought that the students really know more than they think they do. They are in a protected environment as students and do not have full responsibility for a case. They are “flying solo” for the first time in a job and that can be scary. The third field instructor thinks that even though they have the core competencies, they do not feel that they can function independently. This instructor observed that the UPP students are so much more competent than those without UPP and was surprised by the ratings, adding that it might be useful to give students more independent work in their field placements and give them more experience in applying their core competency skills.

- 4) Is there anything additional you would like to share with us about your experience that can help us improve the program in the future?

None of the field instructors offered suggestions for improving UPP. One summarized by saying that she is a training supervisor and can really see a difference between those hired from UPP and those without UPP training. Her only wish is that there be a way to weed out those who are unsuitable for child welfare work before they start the program.

Graduates' Employment Supervisors

Only one supervisor participated in the follow-up interviews. This supervisor's responses are presented below.

- 1) In what ways do you believe UPP grads are better prepared for core competencies than other new employees going through agency core training only?
 - UPP graduates know what to expect when they take jobs in public child welfare. Those without a UPP background are "blind and blindsided."
 - UPP grads are ready to take on responsibility in half the time of non-UPP employees.
 - UPP grads are less fearful
 - Non-UPP hires are often more arrogant and that can be a problem
 - UPP graduates require much less supervisory time
- 2) Field instructors rated students as more confident and competent than students rated themselves on the surveys. What insights can you offer to this finding?

This supervisor suggested that UPP grads will doubt themselves until they have their own caseload. When they start the job they have a lot of book knowledge and less practice knowledge. This isn't an educational or field problem; it just something that will go away as they get more experience. The supervisor was not surprised to learn that they were feeling insecure; feelings of insecurity are normal.

- 3) Is there anything additional you would like to share with us about your experiences that can help us improve the program in the future?

There were no other comments offered.

c. Campus Coordinator focus group

In an effort to capture the richness of the overall discussion and to provide the greatest practical utility of the data for program improvement focus group results are organized and reported as they relate to the questions. Each primary question is presented followed by a summary of the findings reflecting the perceptions of campus coordinators.

General Program Question

What do you believe are the goals of the Title IV-E training program? How well do you believe the program is meeting these goals?

- *"Recruit"*: Most school programs include only undergraduate students with limited master's student involvement reported. For schools with both bachelor

and master's students, the goals are viewed as similar for both. Similar mentoring and education about child welfare is provided, but MSW students may be engaged at a more complex level. While MSW graduates are viewed as more quickly moving into supervisory roles, there was recognition that not all social workers with a master's degree are necessarily "equipped/suited or are ready to become a manager or administrator."

Meeting Goal:

- Recruitment became more difficult after the changes in level of funding occurred. Coordinators reported that "recruitment went down" when the money was cut. Related difficulties were noted in the inconsistent ways institutions apply projected reimbursement for program participation into student financial aid calculations.
 - Recruitment is hampered by the current inability of students to pursue their master's degrees directly after obtaining their BSW.
 - Schools with a larger pool of students do not experience the same level of difficulties in recruitment.
 - Media attention on child welfare incidents impact student recruitment, especially for BSW students.
 - Social work faculty of respective schools could offer more assistance in recruiting students into the program.
- *"Train"*: Participants view the program as preparing students for public child welfare practice. They discussed the UPP as "education" versus "training."

Meeting Goal:

- Specific mandated training is provided through the Ohio Regional Training Center, the child welfare class, and the practicum experience.
 - The group generally agreed that agency feedback indicates program graduates "really are well trained."
 - A key component of this education is the integration of field placement, seminar and child welfare courses as a practical means of modeling by campus coordinators and helping students balance their theoretical learning and with field agency experiences.
- *"Retain"*: Retention of employees in public child welfare was noted as an initial goal of the program.

Meeting Goal:

- Campus coordinators were able to speak anecdotally about the students who were retained or who left child welfare before or after fulfilling their contractual commitment. Three coordinators indicated good or fairly good retention, with one indicating graduate movement into supervision and/or master's programs. One coordinator indicated very mixed retention results, with more recent students choosing to move directly into a master's program. Another coordinator was unsure of retention rates.
- A primary theme throughout the focus group was related to the inability of students to directly pursue their master's degree upon completion of their bachelor's degree due to the program's requirement for immediately fulfilling the employment obligation. "I've lost some really valuable students because they want to go straight away into their master's."

- Participants discussed individual, community, and agency culture as a potential impact on employee retention. Examples included individuals not wanting to leave their respective communities, experiences related to working in rural vs. urban communities and smaller vs. larger agencies, and the sometimes challenging environments of child welfare agencies.
- Though the student contract states a graduate may need to go anywhere in the state, the reduction in job openings in certain geographic areas prevents some graduates from applying for positions.
- *Gate-keeping*: Participants emphasized the important role of the program in “weeding out” students who may not be a good fit for child welfare. Campus coordinators viewed this goal as important to saving the state money it would have invested in training a worker who would only leave within a few months of initial employment. This “weeding out” process often occurs through student self-awareness and recognition that child welfare may not be the best path for them.
- *Promote Careers in Child Welfare*: Participants recalled a goal of the program as producing students with undergraduate degrees who would later obtain their master’s degrees as they move into supervision “so that we have not only social workers, but master’s trained social workers supervising upcoming students and promoting social work within child welfare.”
- *Incorporate Family-Centered Practice Into Child Welfare*: Participants distinguished social work education obtained through the UPP from degrees of other new child welfare workers by its focus on family-centered practice and other social work practice foundations. Family-centered practice was viewed as a means of decreasing out-of-home placements. The “professionalization of child welfare,” a recognized goal of the program, was reframed through a lens of bringing social work foundations and practices to the field.

Student-Related Questions

Rate and describe how well prepared you believe the Title IV-E program is preparing graduates for their starting position in public child welfare using three criteria: (1) overall preparedness of graduates, (2) graduates’ sense of confidence upon hire, and (3) graduates’ sense of competency upon hire.

(Note: Participants viewed a scale for each question to provide their rating assessment.)

Overall Preparedness

Overall preparedness of students.				
1 Poorly Prepared	2 Somewhat Prepared	3 Adequately Prepared	4 Well Prepared	5 Very Well Prepared

The average rating across coordinators was 3.8 (4 rated well prepared; 1 rated adequately prepared). Participants generally indicated that coordinators and agencies believe students are well prepared, with a potential exception related to understanding agency cultural differences across counties. One participant

indicated an agency had expected UPP graduates to need much less supervision than was actually necessary. Coordinators view the new graduates as better prepared than the graduates view themselves. Subsequent coordinator contact with graduates reveals that graduates eventually recognize their advanced level of preparation over other workers who did not go through the UPP. Coordinators attribute students' initial self-assessment to their lack of confidence.

Confidence

Students' sense of confidence upon graduation.				
1 Not at all Confident	2 Somewhat Confident	3 Adequately Confident	4 Very Confident	5 Extremely Confident

The average rating across coordinators was 3.2 (4 rated adequately confident; 1 rated very confident). Participants generally attributed graduates' lower level of confidence to their transition from student status to full-time child welfare worker. They are given increased responsibility yet realize how much they still need to learn. With one exception, whereby it was noted that smaller agencies are able to provide richer student experiences and supervision, coordinators believe that increased confidence will "require experience and success."

Competence

Students' sense of confidence upon graduation.				
1 Not at all Competent	2 Somewhat Competent	3 Adequately Competent	4 Very Competent	5 Extremely Competent

The average rating across coordinators was 3.7 (1 rated extremely competent; 1 rated adequately competent; 3 rated between adequately and very confident). Coordinators generally agreed that they wanted to "link the sense of competence to confidence" stating that graduates are only as competent as they feel (i.e., their confidence). At the same time, graduates recognize that they have had the opportunity to observe and actually do some of the work and do feel somewhat competent.

What kind of feedback about the program have you received from students and/or graduates of the program?

Coordinators generally indicated they receive positive feedback from students and graduates. Graduates have a desire to stay connected to the program for both academic and emotional reasons. There was an overall sense that students and graduates feel pride in their program participation. Students have "this sense of feeling special...that they're part of something that's valuable and important." Students also have "a sense of feeling sheltered" as a result of all of the people directly involved in their education, such as the campus coordinator, classroom and seminar instructors, and field instructors.

As the program helps students acclimate to their experiences, students who are not emotionally prepared for the work begin to self-select out of child welfare work. One coordinator begins this process early on during an intensive interview process for admission into the program and has received positive feedback from

students about this early orientation. The coordinators agreed that students use the seminars to process their field experiences, learn about the need and ways to engage in self-care. Coordinators also indicated that students appreciate the extensive coverage of safety issues (related to physical danger and individual health) in the program, whether this is accomplished in the classroom or through the field agency.

Questions Related to Job Satisfaction and Program Improvement

How satisfied are you with your job as campus coordinator?

Campus coordinators undoubtedly enjoy their work. Most of them indicated that they “love” their jobs. By far the greatest satisfaction comes from their direct and extensive work with the students on an individual level. Comments such as “there’s a lot of contact, valuable, that’s gonna propel them on,” “I feel like I make a difference,” and “I do believe in the overall philosophy of the program” are indicative of the overall sense of satisfaction. Other areas of satisfaction include the variety of work performed by coordinators, interaction with agency field practicum sites, interaction with colleagues, and a sense that one can effect change within the child welfare system.

An area of mixed response was related to the level of support campus coordinators receive from their individual institutions. Some participants feel well supported, while others feel they receive adequate to little support. One area of some dissatisfaction is related to compensation. A desire was expressed for increased compensation for campus coordinators to provide some financial reward for their program successes. Coordinators reported that aside from some merit increases, the basic compensation structure has not changed since 2002. Finally a desire was noted for additional funds to allow campus coordinators to enhance their individual programs for students.

What, if any, changes to the program need to be made to enhance your ability to serve as a campus coordinator?

Standardization of Program Implementation. Coordinators reported issues related to a lack of standardization across programs that present challenges to their work. Contractual guidelines can be interpreted differently across programs, particularly with regard to the following:

- Integration of program into the schools and institutions. Some of the coordinators at different points over the years have felt that their respective institutions did not recognize or include them as a viable part of the school/institution. Some coordinators do not attend faculty meetings and others attend but are minimally, if at all, recognized.
- Support and recognition of campus coordinators as part of the school. Not all campus coordinators are afforded the contractually required office space with telephone and computer within the school facilities, thereby limiting their contact with students and the institution, and impacting effectiveness in program coordination. Coordinators were unanimous in verbalizing how essential office space is to effectively carrying out their responsibilities, particularly with regard to student contact.

- Expectations, roles, and supervision of campus coordinators. While not all campus coordinators agreed on the need for role clarification, they agreed that without strong support from the campus administrator, a lack of role clarity would lead to a very difficult working situation. Some suggestions for clarification include defining which classes coordinators are required to teach, which students (UPP vs. non-UPP) coordinators are required to teach in the child welfare classes, and expectations for liaisons with the agencies.
- Needs related to institutional-agency partnerships, particularly with regard to resolving field placement issues.
- Overall institutional understanding of the UPP. There was general agreement that not all institutions desire to operate according to the original UPP protocols.

What suggestions for improvement would you offer the child welfare training program?

In addition to the need for standardization of the program across universities, other areas of improvement were identified. Such areas include fiscal challenges related to demonstrated commitment to the UPP by the state, consistency in how the financial aspects of the program are implemented across institutions, monitoring and accountability of student commitments, needs related to field placements, and consideration of restructuring program requirements to allow direct pursuit of a graduate degree.

Commitment and Consistency by the State.

- Coordinators discussed challenges associated with the state's consistent delay in renewing the UPP contract. This process triggers a related delay in payment to the campus coordinators, often leaving them without payment during the summer months. Campus coordinators appear to continue fulfilling their work obligations without payment out of their individual commitment to child welfare.
- The slow contractual commitment of the state creates issues for institutional budgets and brings about questions within the institutions related to the ongoing fiscal viability of the program and contract.

Fiscal Processes Implemented Across Institutions. Coordinators discussed multiple challenges related to their respective institutional fiscal processes related to implementation of the UPP.

- Coordinators described spending many hours working with different offices within their institutions in an attempt to develop smooth billing and payment processes related to the UPP. Coordinators reported a big difference between the state and university calendars which do not work in tandem.
- Some institutions require fiscal processes go through offices of Sponsored Programs creating a different set of challenges. There is a difference in language, whereby the state calls the UPP a contract and the university calls it a grant. This has caused additional delays in payment and processing of documents.

- The campus coordinators identified a need for cross-agency training of both state and university fiscal-related employees on the UPP program to increase their understanding of fiscal culture, standards, and guidelines of each, and specify how these impact fiscal-related issues of the UPP. One coordinator described a previous experience whereby another institution of higher education chose not to participate in the Title IV-E program because of the fiscal-related challenges.

Monitoring and Accountability for the Contractual Obligations. It is unclear who carries responsibility for recouping money when students do not fulfill their obligation. Coordinators reported receiving different messages and instructions from agencies and institutions related to such situations. An agency response heard more than once is that the agency did not enter into the contractual obligation and is therefore not responsible for seeking the money from the student. Institutions have tried different approaches to independently try to recover the funding. While it was reported that a letter template is now available for institutions to send to agencies in an effort to obtain a signature from the graduate indicating responsibility for the obligation, the group agreed that the appropriate process remains unclear. This lack of clarity places the campus coordinators in uncertain situations for holding students accountable and making decisions with potential for ethical dilemmas and legal ramifications.

Field Placement Issues. One site indicated a need for additional field placements and others indicated needs related to expanding student opportunities. When issues arise that prohibit or limit the range of experiences in agencies students are not afforded adequate field experiences. Coordinators related this issue to university-agency partnerships expressing a need for increased effort in building these relationships. Increased relationships could ensure needed field placements and reduce unnecessary competition for placements. They may also serve to expand the range of hands-on opportunities beyond shadowing for students in placement.

Restructuring Employment Obligation for Graduate Degree. Campus coordinators discussed at length the impact of the current program structure which prevents students from moving directly from their bachelor's degree into an MSW program. This barrier reportedly impacts recruitment and retention. The coordinators recommend that students be given the option of immediate employment or graduate school. Changes to the contract were suggested whereby "if they [students] take the agreement in their senior year of the BSW program, or maybe their junior/senior year, they can either be employed immediately upon graduation or the 180 days they have, or they can be employed following an advanced standing MSW program." The group suggested that with this option of an advanced standing degree graduates should get the money upon employment following their graduate degree.

Positive Thoughts about the University Partnership Program

Campus coordinators believe the UPP is "a terrific program." They were positive about the changes that can be made for program improvement. They value the students and the feedback they provide for making the program better each year. Coordinators feel the program makes an important difference in child welfare

services, even through those students who do not choose public child welfare as their path of employment. Child welfare is a passion of the campus coordinators and they find it rewarding to be a part of people making a commitment to this very difficult profession. "This is what I was called to do...it's a calling."

6. Conclusions

The evaluation of the UPP Title IV-E Child Welfare Educational program provides answers to some of the key questions about the impact and overall success of the program. These questions and the answers derived from the evaluation are presented below.

Do students who participate in UPP accept positions in public child welfare agencies in Ohio upon graduation?

Yes. 85% of those who participated in the UPP evaluation had taken jobs in an Ohio public child welfare agency upon graduation. Numbers provided by the state coordinator indicate that 79% of all UPP students who graduated with BSW or MSW degrees accepted employment in public child welfare.

Are UPP graduates prepared for child welfare jobs, and are they confident and competent in their skills when they begin employment?

Yes. There is agreement across all the groups who participated in the evaluation that the UPP graduates are prepared for taking positions in public child welfare. Totals of 86%, 85% & 83% of graduates, field instructors, and employment supervisors, respectively, thought that the UPP graduates were adequately to extremely well prepared for working in a public child welfare agency. This is also consistent with the comments voiced by the campus coordinators in their focus group. The campus coordinators also said they had received this feedback throughout the year from field instructors and others in the agencies.

The field instructors (85%) and employment supervisors (83%) thought the UPP graduates were adequately to extremely confident, and similarly, 89% of the field instructors and 83% of the employment supervisors thought the UPP grads were adequately to extremely competent.

The percentage of UPP graduates who reported feeling adequately to extremely confident (41%) or adequately to extremely competent (69%) in the first three months after employment was lower than the ratings given by the field instructors or employment supervisors. The UPP graduates' sense of confidence and competence increased after three months on the job to 66% and 90%, respectively.

In the phone interviews, the field instructors thought that the discrepancy between the ratings of the graduates and the field instructors or supervisors was interesting. They attributed the differences to (1) few opportunities for the students to work independently during their field practicum, (2) a sense that students know more than they think they do, and (3) that "flying solo" in the first year can be very scary. The campus coordinators attributed the differences to the same factors.

Do UPP students acquire the core competencies needed for child welfare practice?

Yes. 85% of field instructors and 83% of supervisors thought UPP grads had better core competency skills than non-UPP graduates who received core training only. Similar opinions were expressed by the campus coordinators who further articulated a goal for UPP of incorporating “family-centered practice” and other social work foundation principles into the curriculum as a means of distinguishing UPP graduates from other child welfare workers. They noted that this would ultimately lead toward a goal of decreasing out-of-home placements.

Are UPP graduates satisfied with their jobs in child welfare and do they plan to pursue a career in public child welfare?

Yes. 90% of the graduates reported that they were satisfied to extremely satisfied with their jobs in public child welfare. 45% of them were very or extremely satisfied with their jobs. Furthermore, 83% of the graduates reported that they intend to work beyond their contract obligation for UPP and 57% of them plan to have careers in child welfare.

Are field instructors satisfied with their participation in UPP?

Yes. 100% of the field instructors were satisfied to extremely satisfied with their participation in UPP. All would recommend the program to other social work students and all of them would recommend the program to their colleagues and encourage them to be field instructors.

Are the agency supervisors satisfied with graduates of UPP?

Yes. 100% of employment supervisors were satisfied to extremely satisfied with the UPP graduates; 50% of them said they were extremely satisfied; 67% said that the UPP graduates needed less supervision than non-UPP hires and all the employment supervisors said that they would recommend that their agencies hire other UPP graduates.

These findings are very encouraging and suggest that the UPP Title IV-E Child Welfare Educational program was achieving many of the critical goals that the program was designed to accomplish. The intention of 57% of the graduates to pursue careers in public child welfare is promising. However, there appears to be no standardized way of gathering and retaining retention information across program sites or in collaboration with child welfare agencies. Not all Campus Coordinators were knowledgeable about their individual program’s actual long-term retention rates, and this evaluation is unable to assess whether retention rates are better for graduates of UPP than for non-UPP hires. Future evaluations may be able to provide more definitive answers to the questions pertaining to worker retention.

Is the UPP program uniformly implemented at the seven participating Ohio public universities?

Yes and No. Campus coordinators were asked about programmatic changes needed to enhance their ability to effect administer the programs in their universities. A

primary area of concern for campus coordinators dealt with the lack of standardized program implementation across universities. Differences across universities included overall university support, recognition of the program, roles of the campus coordinators, and the extent to which the university-agency partnership provides adequate field education. An additional challenge to implementing the program focused on differing fiscal processes across the universities. Coordinators report spending an inordinate amount of time dealing with internal university billing, payment and financial aid procedures. These issues are complicated by the state's recurring delays in annual UPP contract renewal.

7. Recommendations

Although the UPP Title IV-E Child Welfare Educational program appears to be achieving its primary goals, there were a variety of suggestions offered by the graduates, field instructors, employment supervisors, and campus coordinators for improving UPP and its administration. In addition, the evaluation suggests a number of strategies that can be adopted in future years to allow for an ongoing, rigorous evaluation of the UPP outcomes. Each of these topics (i.e., suggestions for programmatic changes, suggestions for administrative changes, and suggestions for future evaluations) will be addressed in the next three sections.

a. Suggestions for Programmatic Changes

The suggestions for program improvement can be grouped under three headings. This first offers suggestions for changes to the field practicum, the second provides suggestions for changing the social work courses, and the third addresses possible improvements in the program requirements. Suggestions for changes are listed under each topic but do not represent any ordering by importance or frequency of response.

Suggestions for Improving the UPP Field Experience

- **Provide more opportunities for independence and autonomy in the field practicum; let students do more than shadow workers.**
Students, field instructors, supervisors, and campus coordinators hypothesized that the students' low ratings on confidence and competence upon beginning their jobs in child welfare could be a result of not having any opportunities to "fly solo" during the field practicum. Building in more responsibility for cases might help boost the graduates' confidence in their ability to do the job.
- **Shadowing experienced workers is helpful but should begin early in the field practicum.**
Graduates thought that learning in the field would be expedited by being allowed to shadow workers earlier in their field practicum.
- **Provide opportunities for students to participate in agency committees to help them add a more macro perspective to their field practicum.**
It was suggested that students could feel more connected and learn more about the agency if they had the opportunity to participate in agency

committees. This would also provide a more macro view of the issues in child welfare and a broader learning experience.

- **Build in peer mentoring so that graduates of the UPP who are employed in county agencies can mentor UPP students in their field placements.**
A related suggestion was to recruit more UPP graduates to serve as field instructors for UPP students. In both cases it was suggested that previous UPP participants would be able to address some of the unique concerns of the UPP students.
- **Try to assign more than one student to an agency so that the students can provide support to each other.**

Suggestions for Improving the UPP Social Work Courses

- **Additional content on a variety of topics was suggested.**
The UPP graduates who are now practicing in the field indicated that they would like more content on:
 - Legal issues in child welfare, especially on preparing to testify in court, preparing a defensible case review, and court procedures
 - Working with families with substance abuse or mental health problems
 - Dealing with other systems such as the court and schools
 - How to access resources in the community
 - Working with involuntary clients
 - How to deal with the emotional and psychological aspects of the job
 - How to use CAPMIS and SACWIS earlier in the program
 - Safety assessment versus risk assessment
 - How to deal with the agency culture, e.g., bureaucracies, interpersonal relationships among workers, and job stress
- **Update the content of the courses**
Graduates of the program were generally very satisfied with the social work courses that were required as part of UPP. However, after being employed in child welfare they suggested the following:
 - Update the videos and readings used in class
 - Bring in speakers (e.g., current caseworkers or child welfare administrators) with information on current practices in child welfare
 - Bring in speakers from other system such as the schools and courts. It was suggested that presentations from the agency's legal department or a magistrate from Family Court would be particularly helpful
 - Add information on CAPMIS and SACWIS
 - Use examples from real cases
 - Provide more practical information on how to complete and manage agency paperwork
- **Review the requirement that UPP students must attend additional courses such as the UPP seminar**
Views were very mixed on whether UPP students should be required to take an additional seminar. Many graduates and campus coordinators thought the seminar was very useful and gave them an opportunity to discuss issues they

were having in their field placements. Others indicated that the additional requirement imposed a burden on already overworked students.

Suggestions for Improving Program Design

- **Continue to offer the monetary incentive and consider adding other incentives**

Many of the graduates indicated that the monetary incentive was one of the primary reasons for accepting employment in a public child welfare agency. This does not detract from their interest in working with families and children which was given as the other main reason for accepting employment. Other incentives for participating in the program that might be considered include providing free copies of the *Field Guide to Child Welfare* (noted by a student as a particular contribution to preparedness) and reimbursement for part-time employees. The importance of following through on the reimbursement commitments was emphasized.
- **Consider delaying the pay-back work obligation until students complete the MSW degree.**

Both BSW graduates who accepted employment and those who did not suggested providing the option of delaying the contractual work requirement until after obtaining their MSW degree. Some graduates decided to forego the reimbursement to continue their education; with this option they might have made a different decision. The Campus Coordinators also suggested delaying the work obligation to allow the UPP graduates to continue their education.

b. Suggestions for Administrative Changes

- **Formally Define University Partnership Program Goals**

While there appears to be a common understanding of the operational goals of the UPP as evidenced by results from the campus coordinator focus group, there exists no formalized written statement of program goals. The goals initially developed for the UPP upon program inception were not carried forward in the revised standard contracts between universities and the state. As the UPP considers efforts toward program improvement it is important to ensure all stakeholders move forward with a common understanding of the purpose and goals of the program.
- **Standardizing Program Implementation**

An examination of findings across program levels illustrated challenges related to differences across universities in implementing the UPP. These differences and challenges were most clearly articulated by campus coordinators and were supported with data from participant surveys and phone interviews. A lack of uniformity across programs suggests implications for quality control and future evaluation and research efforts. Following are some examples of suggested areas for improvement.

 - Define roles of UPP administrators, including state coordinator, university program administrators, and campus coordinators

- Ensure comparable levels of recognition and support of the UPP by schools and universities
 - Ensure field placements with all partnering public child welfare agencies provide adequate opportunities for student learning and field practice
 - Partner with all participating universities to develop standard fiscal processes related to the UPP; this seems particularly important to minimize the impact of state contractual delays
 - Develop a standard process for state coordinator to provide oversight ensuring university compliance with contractual obligations and conformity with program policies and procedures
- **Revise Student Contracts**
Revise the UPP student contracts to include a provision that permits campus coordinators to maintain current contact information on them and to allow future evaluators to contact them directly.
 - **UPP-Agency Partnership**
This area relates to bringing more consistency and support to the field agencies. Participants specifically suggested providing more training and support for field instructors in an effort to recruit additional field instructors, provide necessary mentoring around expectations for field instructors, and increase instructor general knowledge of the UPP and their ability to tie course curriculum with field practice. Participants further suggested increased contact between campus coordinators and agencies.
 - **Graduate Satisfaction with Child Welfare Employment**
The findings clearly indicate two specific factors, supervision post-graduation and agency culture, which contribute and/or detract from their job satisfaction in public child welfare. While these issues cannot be resolved by the UPP, they are related to retention of UPP graduates in public child welfare career paths. In this context, the UPP may want to consider how it can incorporate into its curriculum general ways of effectively working in organizations with bureaucratic management structures and how to effectively manage challenges with supervision.

Noted Administrative Strengths

In addition to the suggestions for administrative improvement, study participants noted several areas where the UPP appears to be effectively meeting its intended goals.

- **Gate-Keeping**
Campus coordinators are responsible for ensuring appropriate candidates are selected for participation in the UPP and in monitoring students' continued fit throughout the program. Participants, including graduates, indicated efforts taken resulting employment decisions as a result of their interactions and learning in the program. Campus coordinators view this as an important role they serve, and the findings would suggest this function continue. Some examples of how this "weeding out" process occurs include an intensive pre-

acceptance interview process, students' and regular and frequent contact with field instructors through individual consultations and seminar.

- **Positive University-Agency Relationships**

While suggestions were made for improving university-agency relationships, it should be noted that field instructors and campus coordinators alike identified positive relationships with one another and/or between the agency and university that contribute to both field instructor satisfaction and campus coordinator ability to monitor student performance.

- **Field Instructor Interaction**

A specific practice noted as contributing to field instructor satisfaction was their ability to interact with one another and share experiences. This appears to currently occur through joint meetings of field instructors typically arranged by campus coordinators. A related suggestion was for a state-wide field instructor meeting. Relating this to the noted suggestion for increasing the number of field instructors, the UPP may want to consider incorporating some incentives for field instructors, such as trainings that provide CEUs.

c. **Suggestions for Future Evaluation of UPP**

This evaluation of the University Partnership Title IV-E Child Welfare Educational Program (UPP) provided insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the program during its first four years of operation as seen through the eyes of the UPP graduates, field instructors, employment supervisors, and campus coordinators. It also identified a number of suggestions and considerations for improving the program which should be discussed by the University Partnership.

The evaluation was limited however by (1) difficulties in contacting graduates of the program due to outdated e-mail and mailing addresses, (2) the lack of data and access to official employment records, (3) the paucity of relevant standardized measures for the program goals and outcomes, (4) human subjects concerns that prohibited evaluators' direct contact with the program graduates, (5) the lack of a comparison group of non-UPP employees, and (6) a low response rate which often occurs with online survey research. If possible, future evaluations of the UPP should address these limitations and employ more rigorous research designs to examine what happens to UPP graduates throughout their careers in child welfare and to establish the causal connection between participation in UPP and worker retention, job satisfaction, and competence. Suggestions for future research presented below attempts to address these issues.

Evaluation Continuum

It is clear from previous attempts to evaluate Title IV-E programs (Zlotnik et al., 2005a, b, c) that there are many challenges to implementing a rigorous evaluation of the impact that child welfare education programs have on critical outcomes for child welfare practice such as worker retention, job satisfaction, and worker competence. It is important the programs like UPP be evaluated on a regular basis but the nature of that evaluation may be determined by what data can be accessed, costs, and questions of who will undertake the evaluation. We

are proposing an evaluation model for the University Partnership Program that takes these factors into account to guide the type of evaluation that is undertaken and is consistent with recommendations made elsewhere for evaluating Title IV-E programs (Zlotnik et al., 2005c). The model consists of an “evaluation continuum” ranging from methods used to assess program quality up to a rigorous experimental evaluation of the program.

The Evaluation Continuum. The continuum consists of three levels of evaluation as presented in Figure 15. Table 28 provides an overview of some illustrative questions that can be answered with each level of evaluation, who should undertake the evaluation, and costs associated with each evaluative approach.

Figure 15. The evaluation design continuum.

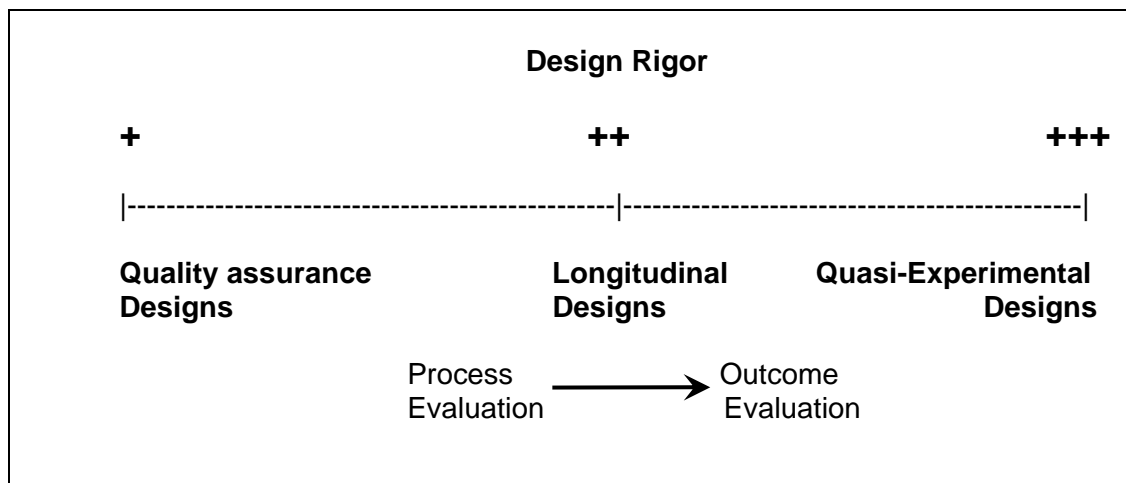


Table 28. Evaluation designs.

Evaluation Design	Questions	Evaluator	Costs
Quality assurance (process & outputs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the program being implemented as planned? • Are participants satisfied with the program? • Are graduates taking jobs in child welfare? • Do graduates appear to be prepared, competent, and confident as they begin employment in public child welfare? • Is the program implemented consistently across universities? 	Evaluation staff from IHS	Minimal cost
Longitudinal (process & outcomes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do UPP grads take and stay in child welfare jobs beyond their contract obligations? • Do UPP grads make careers in child welfare? • Do UPP grads get promoted to supervisory positions? • Are grads satisfied with their jobs? • Is the program implemented consistently across time and across universities? 	Outside evaluator hired to track grads over time	Costly
Quasi-Experimental Process & causal outcomes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do UPP grads outperform non-UPP grads in terms of retention, promotion, competence, confidence, and job satisfaction? • Do UPP outcomes differ by university, participant characteristics, campus coordinator, location of field placement, post-employment supervision, etc? • Is there fidelity to the program model? 	Outside evaluation researcher	Very costly

Quality Assurance Evaluation. Since its inception in 2002 UPP has relied on a quality assurance model to provide a process evaluation of the Title IV-E child welfare education program. The state coordinator has collected information from the campus coordinators on numbers of students admitted to the program, the number of graduates, how many accept employment in an Ohio child welfare agency, how many graduates fulfill their contractual work obligation, and which counties employ the UPP graduates. In addition, she has conducted focus groups for the graduates and field instructors at each participating university on an annual basis. This mixed methods approach to evaluating the implementation and outcomes of UPP is useful for monitoring program quality and making changes to the programs based on the feedback from the UPP participants.

At a minimum this type of evaluation should be continued for the University Partnership Program. The usefulness of this type of evaluation can be enhanced by incorporating some simple changes in the way the data are collected, analyzed, and reported. Recommended changes include:

- Have the annual focus groups conducted by an outside evaluator who is familiar with UPP but not directly involved in administering the program. For example, evaluators on the IHS staff could be called upon to conduct and analyze the focus group data using questions that have been generated by the program staff and the University Partnership Consortium. This will provide a more objective assessment of the program's quality.
- Employ standard focus group research procedures such as having a facilitator and a recorder, audio-taping the sessions, verbatim transcription, and recognized qualitative data analysis techniques.
- Analyze the focus group data by university and aggregated across universities. Compare the focus group analyses to the formal goals and objectives of UPP.
- Implement more standardized procedures for reporting information on the program outputs. Create reporting guidelines and timelines for the campus coordinators and revise the job descriptions of the campus coordinators to include data collection on their students and the responsibility of maintaining up-to-date contact information for program graduates.
- Include a "fidelity" measure to assess the extent to which the universities are implementing the program as planned. This can be done with targeted questions in the focus groups, evaluating the course syllabi for the Child Welfare I and Child Welfare II courses, assessing the content of the seminar content, observing classes, and collecting information on the number and type of contacts between the campus coordinators and field placement agencies.

Longitudinal Evaluation. A longitudinal evaluation of UPP can provide information on the primary goals for the program, i.e., improved retention of child welfare workers in Ohio, worker performance and worker satisfaction. Furthermore, it can provide important information on the implementation of the UPP model across time and across universities and can better track the career paths of UPP educated workers. This type of evaluation can also identify factors that are associated with retention and competence in child welfare workers. This information can inform student selection criteria and inform changes to the educational program.

A longitudinal evaluation consists of both a process evaluation component followed by an outcome evaluation component. After first assessing whether the program has been implemented as planned at each of the universities, data on various outcome measures can be gathered to determine if the program is achieving the formal programmatic goals.

Completing a longitudinal evaluation requires that the evaluator has the ability to contact past participants in the program on a regular basis and that state-level data can be accessed to track UPP employee hiring and termination dates. Although the longitudinal evaluation does not employ a comparison group, the retention data for UPP graduates can be compared to the state and county retention rates. The costs associated with completing a longitudinal evaluation are associated with the time and energy needed to contact graduates of the program annually, hiring an evaluator familiar with longitudinal evaluation

methods, and identifying or developing standardized data collection tools as necessary.

To complete a longitudinal evaluation of UPP the following conditions need to be in place.

- Methods for tracking the whereabouts of UPP graduates and maintaining current contact lists of addresses and e-mail addresses need to be developed. This can be built into the job descriptions of the campus coordinators who will be required to report annual updates to the contact information for all grads. This information can be stored in a UPP database to permit periodic contact with the graduates for evaluative purposes.
- The student contracts need to include consent to be contacted by UPP program evaluators and an agreement to report address changes to the campus coordinators for a specified period of time (e.g., five years).
- Short and long-term goals for UPP need to be articulated and formalized in a written description of the program.
- An objective, outside evaluator with skills in longitudinal designs should be hired. Depending on the nature of the available data and the number of participants included in the evaluation database, the evaluator should be familiar with a variety of analysis methods such as survival analysis or other relevant multivariate statistical procedures.
- Possible outcome variables of interest (based on earlier evaluations of Title IV-E education programs Zlotnik, et al., 2005a) include:
 - Length of time on job, time to termination
 - Reason for termination
 - Time to promotion
 - Standardized measure of worker competence
 - Standardized measure of worker satisfaction
 - Standardized measure of organizational culture such as satisfaction with supervision, worker interpersonal relations, perceived support, etc.
- Procedures for collecting and reporting of process and outcome data annually

Quasi-Experimental Evaluation.

A quasi-experimental evaluation of UPP would provide a comparative analysis between UPP-educated and non-UPP-educated child welfare workers on several key outcome variables. This is certainly the most rigorous and informative of the evaluation designs but also one of the most difficult and costly to implement. It also requires an analysis of the extent to which the program was implemented as planned in each of the universities (see the description under longitudinal evaluation).

The greatest challenge in conducting an experimental evaluation of UPP is to identify a comparison group that is equivalent to the UPP graduates on key demographic variables that might influence a worker's retention, job satisfaction, and competence. For example, a comparison group might consist of child welfare workers that are matched to UPP graduates in terms of (1) the date of hire, (2) employing units, (3) type of county (urban or rural), (4) previous child welfare experience, and (5) level of education and type of degree. Previous research suggests that these factors may influence the length of time a worker

stays in child welfare work, time to promotion, their satisfaction with the job, and their performance/competence as a child welfare worker (Zlotnik, et al., 2005d). Outcome measures similar to those used in the longitudinal evaluation can be employed.

The cost of conducting a quasi-experimental evaluation of UPP is increased by the time needed to include enough subjects to allow for meaningful statistical analyses, additional time for conducting the analyses, and hiring an evaluator with the skills to complete a quasi-experimental evaluation of the program.

Decisions about the appropriate method for future evaluations of UPP should be made by the University Partnership Consortium. Factors to be considered in the decision include the availability of data from UPP graduates and state databases, available funds to pay for the evaluation, and the questions/purposes that are guiding the evaluation effort. This discussion should take place within the framework of reviewing the current evaluation effort and should conclude in time to implement a more rigorous evaluation of UPP beginning with the 2007-2008 academic year.

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9. Appendices

Appendix A
Survey for UPP Graduates

(following 12 pages)

University Partnership Program Graduate Survey

Welcome to the UPP Graduate Survey!

Welcome to the survey of the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program! We appreciate your willingness to consider participating in our study.

Drs. Denise Bronson and Tamara Davis at the Ohio State University College of Social Work are examining the implementation of the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program. The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and the Institute for Human Services believe the program is at a point where the program can be evaluated to find out if it is meeting its intended goals. The results of the study will provide information to help assess the program's first four years of implementation and determine future areas of focus.

Multiple levels of program participants are being asked to participate in this study, including program graduates, field instructors, supervisors of program graduates, and the campus coordinators of the program. We believe it is important to capture the perceptions and experiences of all levels of participants to obtain the most comprehensive understanding of the program. We are especially interested in understanding how the Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program is meeting its intended goals, how the training program has influenced worker job satisfaction and workforce retention, and the preparation of graduates for their work in children's services.

We hope you will choose to participate in the survey and offer your input into helping the continued improvement of the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program. If you choose to continue, please click on the following link and you will be directed to a page where you will be asked to formally provide your consent to participate.

Thank you!

Denise Bronson and Tamara Davis

Consent to Participate - Part I

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision about whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to indicate consent at the end of this form.

Purpose:

This evaluation study intends to examine the processes by which the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program is implemented and whether the program is meeting its intended goals. Information is being gathered from multiple levels of participants to assess the first four years of implementation to determine areas of strength and those needing improvement. Because students are the focus of the program it is important for the evaluation to include feedback and perceptions from those who graduated from the training program.

Procedures/Tasks:

All graduates of the University Partnership Program are being asked to participate in an on-line survey. You will be asked to provide some basic demographic information and then complete a survey asking about your experiences in the program and your employment after graduation. If you chose to work in children's services after graduation, we'd like to hear how you felt about your preparation for your job, your job satisfaction, your future career plans, and any recommendations you may be willing to offer for improving the training program. If you decided not to work in a public child welfare agency we would like to know why.

Duration:

We anticipate the on-line survey taking no more than 30 minutes to complete. You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University or the University Partnership Program, or the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services.

Risks and Benefits:

The direct benefits you may gain by participating in the study are being given the opportunity to have your voice heard about issues that are important to the program. The indirect benefits of the study lie in the fact that this study will provide key information for further improving the University Partnership Program.

The risks related to this study are minimal. The questions are not intended to request sensitive information, and participants may choose how much and what information they want to share. No personally identifiable information will be linked to the published results.

Confidentiality:

All information gathered through this evaluation will remain confidential. Your name will not be linked to any written materials resulting from the study.

While all efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by law.

Consent to Participate - Part II

Incentives:

If you choose to complete the survey you will be eligible to receive one of four randomly awarded \$50 gift cards.

Participant Rights:

You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you are a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By consenting to participate you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

Contacts and Questions:

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Dr. Denise Bronson or Dr. Tamara Davis, professors in the College of Social Work at The Ohio State University by telephone at (614) 292-6288.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

Consent to Participate

I have read this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by consenting to participate. I may choose to print a copy of this form at this time to retain for my records.

Thank you for your interest in the child welfare training program.

Please indicate your choice to participate in this survey.

YES, I consent to participate. After marking "YES" and "Continue" you will be directed to the on-line survey.

NO, I choose not to participate at this time. After marking "NO" and "Continue" you will be directed out of the survey. You may revisit the survey and start over if you choose to participate at a later time before the end of the survey period (April 30, 2007).

CONTACT INFORMATION

PLEASE NOTE: If you choose not to complete the contact information we will be unable to include your name in the raffle for the \$50 gift card.

FIRST Name

LAST Name

Work Mailing Address

Street Address 1

Street Address 2

City

ZIP

E-mail Address

Telephone Number

Continue to the next question?

YES - I want to continue the survey

NO - I already completed the survey; return me to end of survey

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The following questions will provide us with some basic information from program graduates.

Year of Graduation

Age at Time of Graduation

Degree Obtained

County of Field Placement

Race and Ethnicity (please self-identify)

EMPLOYMENT

The next set of questions is intended to provide us with an understanding of graduates' decisions around accepting or not accepting employment in public child welfare.

Did you accept an employment contract with public child welfare services post graduation?

YES

NO

ACCEPTED EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

In which county were you employed immediately after graduation?

What was the start date of your employment?

Month/Approx Day/Year MM DD YYYY
 / /

What was the title of your first position?

Please describe the primary reasons for your decision to accept a position with public child welfare services.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

With the following questions, please describe how well prepared you have felt for your work in public child welfare:

Overall Preparedness

- 1 Poorly Prepared
- 2 Somewhat Prepared
- 3 Adequately Prepared
- 4 Well Prepared
- 5 Very Well Prepared

University Partnership Program Graduate Survey

Describe your sense of confidence...

	Not At All Confident	Somewhat Confident	Adequately Confident	Very Confident	Extremely Confident
During your first three months of being hired.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
After your first three months on the job?	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

Describe your sense of competency...

	Not At All Competent	Somewhat Competent	Adequately Competent	Very Competent	Extremely Competent
During your first three months of being hired.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
After your first three months on the job.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

What aspects of the training curriculum/program do you believe most contributed to your preparedness?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Would you recommend the child welfare training program to other social work students?

YES

NO

If you would NOT recommend the program to others, please explain.

University Partnership Program Graduate Survey

Please answer the following questions related to your current job satisfaction.

What is your overall level of satisfaction with your job?

jn 1 Extremely
Unsatisfied

jn 2 Not Very
Unsatisfied

jn 3 Satisfied

jn 4 Very Satisfied

jn 5 Extremely
Satisfied

How has the supervision you have received since hire contributed to your job satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

How much does your experience in the Title IV-E training program positively contribute to your current level of job satisfaction?

jn 1 Contributes
None

jn 2 Contributes
Very Little

jn 3 Contributes
Some

jn 4 Contributes A
Lot

jn 5 Contributes an
Extreme Amount

Please explain your response.

How much does the culture of the public child welfare agency influence your job satisfaction?

- 1 Influences None 2 Influences Very Little 3 Influences Some 4 Influences A Lot 5 Extremely Influences

Please explain your response.

Do you plan to continue your employment in public child welfare beyond your contractual commitment with the Title IV-E training program?

- YES NO

Do you plan to pursue a career with public child welfare?

- YES NO

Wrap Up

What suggestions for improvement would you offer the child welfare training program?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

University Partnership Program Graduate Survey

We would like to talk with supervisors of UPP graduates to gather their perceptions of the child welfare training program. If you are willing, please share with us the name and email address of your first direct supervisor upon employment. (If you provide us with this information we will invite the supervisor to participate in a separate survey. Supervisors will not be asked to identify supervisees. Supervisors will be asked to respond generally to questions; information will not be sought about your specific performance.)

Supervisor LAST Name

Supervisor FIRST Name

Supervisor E-Mail Address

Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview with one of the researchers? (If so, a researcher will contact you to schedule an interview to last approximately 30 minutes. Please be certain you have completed the contact information.)

YES

NO

Return to contact information?

YES

NO

DID NOT ACCEPT EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

Please discuss the reasons behind your decision not to pursue a job or career with public child welfare services.

How did the culture of the public child welfare agency influence your decision?

What suggestions for improvement would you offer the child welfare training program?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

What kind of position did you ultimately accept after graduation?

Has your experience in the Title IV-E training program helped you in your current position?

YES

NO

If YES, please describe how it has helped.

Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview with one of the researchers? (If so, a researcher will contact you to schedule an interview to last approximately 30 minutes. Please be certain you have completed the contact information.)

YES

NO

Return to contact information?

YES

NO

SURVEY COMPLETE

Your survey is now complete.

Once you exit the survey your responses will be submitted and you will not be able to return to your survey. If you would like to participate in the raffle for the \$50 gift card, please be certain you have completed the questions requesting contact information.

Return to contact information?

YES

NO

EXITING SURVEY!

Thank you for visiting our survey!

Have a great day!

Appendix B
Survey for Field Instructors

(following 9 pages)

University Partnership Program Field Instructor Survey

Welcome to the UPP Field Instructor Survey!

Welcome to the survey of the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program! We appreciate your willingness to consider participating in our study.

Drs. Denise Bronson and Tamara Davis at the Ohio State University College of Social Work are examining the implementation of the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program. The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and the Institute for Human Services believe the program is at a point where the program can be evaluated to find out if it is meeting its intended goals. The results of the study will provide information to help assess the program's first four years of implementation and determine future areas of focus.

Multiple levels of program participants are being asked to participate in this study, including program graduates, field instructors, supervisors of program graduates, and the campus coordinators of the program. We believe it is important to capture the perceptions and experiences of all levels of participants to obtain the most comprehensive understanding of the program. We are especially interested in understanding how the Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program is meeting its intended goals, how the training program has influenced worker job satisfaction and workforce retention, and the preparation of graduates for their work in children's services.

We hope you will choose to participate in the survey and offer your input into helping the continued improvement of the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program. If you choose to continue, please click on the following link and you will be directed to a page where you will be asked to formally provide your consent to participate.

Thank you!

Denise Bronson and Tamara Davis

UPP Graduate?

Are you a graduate of the UPP yourself?

NO

YES

Yes, UPP Graduate

Thank you for your time. If you are a graduate of the UPP program we ask that you complete only the graduate survey. This will help maintain the lines across roles as we interpret the information gathered.

Consent to Participate - Part I

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to indicate consent at the end of this form.

Purpose:

This evaluation study intends to examine the processes by which the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program is implemented and whether the program is meeting its intended goals. Information is being gathered from multiple levels of participants to assess the first four years of implementation to determine areas of strength and those needing improvement. Because field instructors hold an instrumental role in the implementation of the program it is important for the evaluation to include your feedback and perceptions.

Procedures/Tasks:

All field instructors for the University Partnership Program are being asked to participate in an on-line survey. You will be asked to provide some basic demographic information and then complete a survey asking about perceptions about the program. In particular we'd like to hear how well you believe the training program is preparing graduates for employment in children's services, your overall satisfaction with the program, your satisfaction you're your individual involvement in the program and any recommendations you may be willing to offer for improving the training program.

Duration:

We anticipate the on-line survey taking no more than 30 minutes to complete. You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University or the University Partnership Program, or the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services.

Risks and Benefits:

The direct benefits you may gain by participating in the study are being given the opportunity to have your voice heard about issues that are important to the program. The indirect benefits of the study lie in the fact that this study will provide key information for further improving the University Partnership Program.

The risks related to this study are minimal. The questions are not intended to request sensitive information, and participants may choose how much and what information they want to share. No personally identifiable information will be linked to the published results.

Consent to Participate - Part II

Confidentiality:

All information gathered through this evaluation will remain confidential. Your name will not be linked to any written materials resulting from the study.

While all efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by law.

Incentives:

If you choose to complete the survey you will be eligible to receive one of four randomly awarded \$50 gift cards.

Participant Rights:

You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you are a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By consenting to participate, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

Contacts and Questions:

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Dr. Denise Bronson or Dr. Tamara Davis, professors in the College of Social Work at The Ohio State University by telephone at (614) 292-6288.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

Consent to Participate

I have read this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by consenting to participate. I may choose to print a copy of this form at this time to retain for my records.

Thank you for your interest in the child welfare training program.

Please indicate your consent to participate or your choice not to participate in this survey.

YES, I consent to participate. After marking this box and hitting enter you will be taken to the on-line survey.

NO, I choose not to participate. After marking this box and hitting enter you will be unable to enter the survey and will be redirected to the survey welcome page. You may revisit the survey and start over if you choose to participate at a later time before the end of the survey period (April 30, 2007).

CONTACT INFORMATION

PLEASE NOTE: If you choose not to complete the contact information we will be unable to include your name in the raffle for the \$50 gift card.

LAST Name

FIRST Name

Work Mailing Address

Street Address 1

Street Address 2

City

ZIP

E-mail Address

Telephone Number

Continue to next question?

YES - I want to continue the survey

NO - I already completed the survey; return me to end of survey

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The following questions will provide us with some basic information about field instructors.

County of Employment

Highest Degree Obtained

Field In Which Degree Was Obtained (please specify)

Race and Ethnicity (please self-identify)

How many Title IV-E students have you supervised in each of the following years (excluding current students)?

2002-2003

2003-2004






2004-2005

2005-2006






STUDENT PREPAREDNESS

With the following questions, please describe how well you believe the Title IV-E program is preparing students for their field practicum in public child welfare.

Overall Preparedness of Students

-  1 Poorly Prepared  2 Somewhat Prepared  3 Adequately Prepared  4 Well Prepared  5 Very Well Prepared

Describe your perception of students' sense of confidence upon graduation.

-  1 Not at all Confident  2 Somewhat Confident  3 Adequately Confident  4 Very Confident  5 Extremely Confident

University Partnership Program Field Instructor Survey

Describe your perception of students' sense of competence upon graduation.

- 1 Not at all Competent
 2 Somewhat Competent
 3 Adequately Competent
 4 Very Competent
 5 Extremely Competent

Please rate each of the following aspects of the training curriculum/program on how much you believe it contributed to student preparedness.

	Contributed None	Contributed Very Little	Contributed Some	Contributed A Lot	Contributed An Extreme Amount
1 Child Welfare I Course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Child Welfare II Course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Specialized Seminar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Contact with Campus Coordinator	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Field Practicum in a Public Child Welfare Agency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How would you rate UPP students at the point of graduation in terms of their core competency levels?

- 1 Poorer than non-UPP graduates who received core training only.
 2 Same as non-UPP graduates who received core training only.
 3 Better than non-UPP graduates who received core training only.

UPP PROGRAM QUESTIONS

The following questions ask about your specific perceptions of the UPP training program.

How satisfied have you been with your participation in the Title IV-E training program?

1 Extremely Unsatisfied

2 Not Very Unsatisfied

3 Satisfied

4 Very Satisfied

5 Extremely Satisfied

Please explain your response.

Would you recommend the child welfare training program to other social work students?

YES

NO

If you would NOT recommend the program to other students, please explain.

Would you recommend your colleagues serve as field instructors for students in the child welfare training program?

YES

NO

If you would NOT recommend the program to your colleagues, please explain.

WRAP UP

What suggestions for improvement would you offer the child welfare training program?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview with one of the researchers? (If so, a researcher will contact you to schedule an interview to last approximately 30 minutes. Please be certain you have completed the contact information.)

YES

NO

Return to Contact Information

Do you want to return to contact information?

YES

NO

SURVEY COMPLETE

Your survey is now complete.

Once you exit the survey your responses will be submitted and you will not be able to return to your survey. If you would like to participate in the raffle for the \$50 gift card, please be certain you have completed the questions requesting contact information.

Return to contact information?

YES

NO

EXITING SURVEY!

Thank you for visiting our survey!

Have a great day!

Appendix C
Survey for Graduates' Employment Supervisors

(following 8 pages)

Supervisor of University Partnership Program Graduate Survey

Welcome to the UPP Supervisor Survey!

Welcome to the survey of the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program! We appreciate your willingness to consider participating in our study.

Drs. Denise Bronson and Tamara Davis at the Ohio State University College of Social Work are examining the implementation of the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program. The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and the Institute for Human Services believe the program is at a point where the program can be evaluated to find out if it is meeting its intended goals. The results of the study will provide information to help assess the program's first four years of implementation and determine future areas of focus.

Multiple levels of program participants are being asked to participate in this study, including program graduates, field instructors, supervisors of program graduates, and the campus coordinators of the program. We believe it is important to capture the perceptions and experiences of all levels of participants to obtain the most comprehensive understanding of the program. We are especially interested in understanding how the Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program is meeting its intended goals, how the training program has influenced worker job satisfaction and workforce retention, and the preparation of graduates for their work in children's services.

We hope you will choose to participate in the survey and offer your input into helping the continued improvement of the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program. If you choose to continue, please click on the following link and you will be directed to a page where you will be asked to formally provide your consent to participate.

Thank you!

Denise Bronson and Tamara Davis

UPP Graduate?

Are you a graduate of the UPP yourself?

NO

YES

Yes, UPP Graduate

Thank you for your time. If you are a graduate of the UPP program we ask that you complete only the graduate survey. This will help maintain the lines across roles as we interpret the information gathered.

Consent to Participate - Part I

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to indicate consent at the end of this form.

Purpose:

This evaluation study intends to examine the processes by which the Ohio Title IV-E University Partnership Child Welfare Training Program is implemented and whether the program is meeting its intended goals. Information is being gathered from multiple levels of participants to assess the first four years of implementation to determine areas of strength and those needing improvement. Because supervisors of training program graduates have critical and unique perspectives related to the preparation necessary for children's services workers it is important for the evaluation to include your feedback and perceptions.

Procedures/Tasks:

As someone who supervises graduates of the University Partnership Program you are being asked to participate in an on-line survey. You will be asked to provide some basic demographic information and then complete a survey asking about perceptions about the preparation of program graduates. We'd also like to hear about your overall satisfaction with graduates from the training program.

Duration:

We anticipate the on-line survey taking approximately 20 minutes to complete. You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University or the University Partnership Program, or the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services.

Risks and Benefits:

The direct benefits you may gain by participating in the study are being given the opportunity to have your voice heard about issues that are important to the program. The indirect benefits of the study lie in the fact that this study will provide key information for further improving the University Partnership Program.

The risks related to this study are minimal. The questions are broad in nature and are not intended to elicit sensitive information, and participants may choose how much and what information they want to share. No personally identifiable information will be linked to the published results.

Consent to Participate - Part II

Confidentiality:

All information gathered through this evaluation will remain confidential. Your name will not be linked to any specific responses provided in the survey or to any written materials resulting from the study.

While all efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by law.

Incentives:

If you choose to complete the survey you will be eligible to receive one of four randomly awarded \$50 gift cards.

Participant Rights:

You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you are a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By consenting to participate, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

Contacts and Questions:

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Dr. Denise Bronson or Dr. Tamara Davis, professors in the College of Social Work at The Ohio State University by telephone at (614) 292-6288.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

Consent to Participate

I have read this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by consenting to participate. I may choose to print a copy of this form at this time to retain for my records.

Thank you for your interest in the child welfare training program.

Please indicate your consent to participate or your choice not to participate in this survey.

YES, I consent to participate. After marking "YES" and "Continue" you will be directed to the on-line survey.

NO, I choose not to participate at this time. After marking "NO" and "Continue" you will be directed out of the survey. You may revisit the survey and start over if you choose to participate at a later time before the end of the survey period (April 30, 2007).

CONTACT INFORMATION

PLEASE NOTE: If you choose not to complete the contact information we will be unable to include your name in the raffle for the \$50 gift card.

FIRST Name

LAST Name

Work Mailing Address

Street Address 1

Street Address 2

City

ZIP

E-mail Address

Telephone Number

Continue to the next question?

YES - I want to continue the survey

NO - I already completed the survey; return me to end of survey

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The following questions will provide us with some basic information about supervisors.

County of Employment

Highest Degree Obtained

Field In Which Degree Was Obtained (please specify)

Race and Ethnicity (please self-identify)

How many Title IV-E students have you supervised in each of the following years (excluding current students)?

2002-2003

2003-2004






2004-2005

2005-2006






GRADUATE PREPAREDNESS

With the following questions, please describe how well you believe the Title IV-E program is preparing graduates for their starting position in public child welfare.

Overall Preparedness of Graduates

-  1 Poorly Prepared  2 Somewhat Prepared  3 Adequately Prepared  4 Well Prepared  5 Very Well Prepared

Describe your perception of students' sense of confidence upon hire.

-  1 Not at all Confident  2 Somewhat Confident  3 Adequately Confident  4 Very Confident  5 Extremely Confident

Supervisor of University Partnership Program Graduate Survey

Describe your perception of students' sense of competence upon hire.

1 Not at all
Competent

2 Somewhat
Competent

3 Adequately
Competent

4 Very Competent

5 Extremely
Competent

How would you rate UPP graduates at their point of entry into their first position in terms of their core competency levels?

1 Poorer than non-UPP graduates who received core training only.

2 Same as non-UPP graduates who received core training only.

3 Better than non-UPP graduates who received core training only.

How much supervision do you believe the Title IV-E program graduates need compared to recent hires not part of the UPP program?

1 Less than non-UPP graduates who received core training only.

2 Same as non-UPP graduates who received core training only.

3 More than non-UPP graduates who received core training only.

UPP PROGRAM QUESTIONS

The following questions ask about your specific perceptions of the UPP training program.

How satisfied overall are you with the graduates you have hired from the Title IV-E training program?

1 Extremely
Unsatisfied

2 Not Very
Unsatisfied

3 Satisfied

4 Very Satisfied

5 Extremely
Satisfied

Please explain your response.

Would you recommend that your agency hire other graduates from the child welfare training program?

YES

NO

If you would NOT recommend your agency hire other UPP graduates, please explain.

Wrap Up

What suggestions for improvement would you offer the child welfare training program?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview with one of the researchers? (If so, a researcher will contact you to schedule an interview to last approximately 30 minutes. Please be certain you have completed the contact information.)

YES

NO

Return to Contact Information

Do you want to return to contact information?

YES

NO

Survey Complete

Your survey is now complete.

Once you exit the survey your responses will be submitted and you will not be able to return to your survey. If you would like to participate in the raffle for the \$50 gift card, please be certain you have completed the questions requesting contact information.

Do you want to return to contact information?

YES

NO

Exiting Survey!

Thank you for visiting our survey!

Have a great day!

Appendix D
Students Entering & Completing UPP 2002-2006

**University Partnership Program
Academic Years 2002-2006⁷**

Univ	Jrs begin	Jrs opt out	Jrs finish	Srs begin	Srs opt out	Srs grad	MSWs begin	MSWs opt out	MSWS grad	Srs hired PCSA	Sr grads opt out	Sr grads not hired w/in 180 days	MSW grads hired PCSA	MSW grads opt out	MSW Grads not hired w/in 180 days
Akron	7	2	5	25	3	22	N/A	N/A	N/A	14	1	7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cin	8	0	8	11	0	11	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	5	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
CSU	12	0	8	21	2	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	14	0	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
OU	11	1	10	23	2	21	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	2	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
OSU	N/A	N/A	N/A	33	1	32	9	0	9	19	8	????	5	4	0
Toledo	17	0	17	23	0	21	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	2	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
WSU	4	1	3	27	2	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	22	3	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Totals	59	4	41	163	10	130	9	0	9	105	20		5	4	0

⁷ Prepared by Ann Kiplen, UPP State Coordinator as of 3/5/07

Appendix E
Ohio Counties with UPP Interns and Employees

**University Partnership Program
Academic Years 2002-2006
Ohio PCSAs Hosting UPP Interns⁸
&
Hiring UPP Graduates**

PCSAs Host UPP Interns	PCSAs Hire UPP Graduates
Athens	Athens
Butler	Butler
Champaign	Clark
Clark	Cuyahoga
Crawford	Delaware
Cuyahoga	Fairfield
Fairfield	Franklin
Franklin	Geauga
Fulton	Greene
Greene	Hamilton
Hamilton	Hardin
Hancock	Lake
Henry	Lucas
Hocking	Madison
Jackson	Medina
Lawrence	Miami
Licking	Montgomery
Lucas	Putnam
Medina	Stark
Miami	Summit
Montgomery	VanWert/Allen
Muskingum	Warren
Ottawa	Wayne
Portage	
Sandusky	
Seneca	
Stark	
Union	
Warren	
Washington	
Wayne	
Wood	
TOTAL: 32	TOTAL: 23

⁸ Prepared by Ann Kiplen, UPP State Coordinator

Appendix F

Graduates – Suggestions for Improvement

Note: Statements are direct quotes in most instances. Spelling and punctuation corrections were made to increase readability. References to individual names or names of institutions have been removed to protect identity of respondents.

Mentoring (n=3; 4 suggestions)

- Provide field instructors with more time and ability to truly nurture students.
- A mentor for each student from a previous graduated class.
- Go over requirements and time commitments included in being a mentor with prospective mentors.
- If the mentor is not a supervisor, have the unit supervisor closely monitor what the unit member and the student are doing.

Program Personnel (n=3; 4 suggestions)

- Get [campus coordinator name] back at [university] if at all possible.
- Make sure that instructors of the Title IV-E class have worked in the field more recently than 20 years ago...
- The person who heads the program to have child welfare experience.
- The support of the professors.

Existing Curriculum (n=10; 15 suggestions)

- Update training materials for the Title IV-E class.
- Field work concentration on paperwork and procedures.
- Self assessment on a continual basis needs to be taught and practiced to avoid triangulation with clients.
- More agency specific training.
- Discuss the emotions involved with the job.
- Discuss the stresses involved with the job and review stress relievers.
- Relate training to the job.
- Practice paperwork more frequently.
- Rating risk other than the risk assessment-when is a little risk ok & can close case.
- Increased focus on emotional impact of job and time/stress management.
- A more intense focus on the culture of poverty and its cyclical nature.

Hands-On/Real-Life Experiences

- Ensure that the students have at least one case that they are doing hands on case management.
- For the Core-Equivalent classes, we should cover real case work issues of risk assessment and case planning, not abstractions of case work practice.
- Emphasis that "book" work is not always the same in practice.
- More videos, real stories, discussions with actual social workers in the field rather than text book stuff.

Additional Learning Opportunities (n=8; 16 suggestions)

- Complete two different internships at two different agencies (one rural agency and one urban agency).

- Allow students to participate on some macro level committee to obtain another perspective.
- More opportunities to visit community resources while you are still in school.
- More experience across the intake, ongoing and other fields while in the internship.
- Concentration on agency culture.
- It would also be great to have the legal portion of the core also provided in the classes, so that you come out with all the requirements and information you need.
- More information on accessing services for clients.
- Should require substance abuse training on some level.
- The seminar could include a lawyer teaching about courtroom etiquette, how to build a case, how to testify.
- Look at the dynamics of working with involuntary clients.
- Mandatory shadowing with a court liaison to understand the system better.
- Mental health component.
- How to—court testimony.
- Substance abuse component.
- What to expect in PC hearings & how to be affective.
- Dealing with defense attorneys.

Program Design (n=6; 8 suggestions)

- Implement SACWIS and CAPMIS immediately into the program; we need graduates to understand these phenomena and their impact on practice.
- Have more people participate in it.
- ...we had to meet with the Child Welfare coordinator as well as the regular practicum teacher. I would suggest to only have the students meet with the Child Welfare coordinator to reduce the class load and meetings that are required by the students in this program.
- More seminars for students.
- Time of placement spent be counted during time of hire.
- Field placement to be started earlier on into the program.
- I would suggest that it not be a requirement to meet more often than the other students in the program. This requirement caused discouragement at times as the school year was very busy as it was, without the additional meeting times.
- Trainings in the fall (risk assessment, case plans, etc.) - the tools are necessary for work while co-managing a case.

Administrative (n=3; 8 suggestions)

- Build value for the program at both colleges and counties.
- The problems that I had with the UPP program were largely administrative.
- ... agency was under the impression that upon hiring a UPP student, they would fiscally not be paying to send worker[s] to as many CORE sessions...hiring agency needs to be given specific instructions regarding the elimination of the need of redundancy of CORE. [several suggestions combined]
- Very specific directives need given to agencies hiring UPP students, explaining the reimbursement agreement of the program and what would happen if worker was not extended a year commitment.
- Make sure the field instructor frequents the field placements; [campus coordinator] was the best!

Program Incentives (n=6; 6 suggestions)

- Offer tuition reimbursement to part-time employees.
- Follow through with your obligation to reimburse tuition.
- Upon entering the program, we were told that our entire senior year tuition would be paid for. Somewhere during our second semester of our senior year, we were told there was a \$5,000.00 cap.
- More scholarships.
- Better incentives for new students.
- Set a certain amount of money for the scholarship rather than changing it every year or so...it was changed to only \$5,000 for the second year [after starting with full amount in year one].

Unclear Meaning (n=1)

- Offer more life to work experiences.

No Suggestions (n=7)

Appendix G

Graduate Students – What contributed to preparedness?

What aspects of training curriculum/program do you believe most contributed to your preparedness?

Field Practicum (n=26; 6 suggestions)

- Internship (n=7)
- Field placement/practicum/experience/work (n=14)
- Shadowing other caseworkers (n=1)
- Real life contacts with clients (n=1)
- Instruction received at Summit CCS is hands-on and multifaceted... (n=1)
- Hands on training (n=2)

Child Welfare Classes and Core Training (n=17; 13 suggestions) Child welfare classes (n=7)

- ...[university program] gave not only a test book overview, but a 'reality...' (n=1)
- UPP classes with CSB teachers (n=1)
- UPP classes (n=1)
- Training attended as students (n=1)
- Trainers at [agency] taught 'professionalism' and 'best practice' (n=1)
- The fact that the CORE training was split up and done over a period of time was beneficial for retention (n=1)
- Classes at [university program] regarding CORE (n=1)
- Core training provided gave insight to different thoughts and procedures of different counties (n=1)
- Core trainings (risk assessment, case plan, etc.) (n=1)
- Completing CORE classes prior to beginning work (n=1)
- Core classes as part of the curriculum (n=1)
- Child welfare trainings offered through IV-E and at field practicum (n=1)

Seminar (n=5; 4 suggestions)

- Group meetings for field with [campus coordinator] (n=1)
- Small group sessions that we would have to discuss everyone's experiences (n=1)
- Seminar topics (n=1)
- Seminars (n=2)

Social Work Classes (n=5; 5 suggestions)

- Social work classes (n=1)
- child development (n=3)
- cultural diversity (n=1)
- strengths-based (n=2)
- policy (n=1)

People/Program Personnel (n=9; 10 suggestions)

- Field advisor ... (n=1)
- ... was an amazing supporting (n=1)

- ... is passionate about her work and taught 'best practice' (n=1)
- Having professors that work in the field (n=1)
- The teachers and their experience in the same field (n=1)
- Mentors (n=1)
- One-on-one discussions with campus coordinator (n=1)
- One-on-one supervision with field placement supervisor (n=1)
- Field practicum liaison – sharing stories from actual social work practice and decision making skills (n=1)
- Field Instructor conferences (n=1))

Additional Aspects (n=6; 7 suggestions)

- Experience in courtrooms (n=1)
- Interviewing (n=1)
- Practicing paperwork/Effective documentation (n=2)
- Applying skills throughout the school year (n=1)
- Group exercises/videos (n=1)
- The field books (n=1)
- Practice with mock cases in class to include required paperwork (n=1)

Appendix H

Graduates – Reasons for taking job in child welfare

Please describe the primary reasons for your decision to accept a position with public child welfare services.

Tuition Reimbursement (n=14)

- Tuition reimbursement (n=12)
- Incentives, etc. (n=2)

Interest in Child Welfare/Children and Family Services (n=13)

- Interest in CW and policies/direct practice in field (n=1)
- Enjoyed the type of work (n=1)
- Not a question of whether to work in CW, but in private or public (n=1)
- Reason for getting degree (n=1)
- Work with children (n=2)
- Work with children and families (n=2)
- Child welfare (n=1)
- Interest (n=1)
- Career goal (n=1)
- Personal desire (n=1)
- Work challenges me/able to advocate for families/important & meaningful work/able to directly impact children in foster care (n=1)
- Passionate about CW (n=1)
- What I wanted to do (n=1)

Job Benefits (n=9)

- Job security (n=1)
- Money (n=1)
- Benefits (n=5)
- Pay (n=4)
- Flexibility (n=1)
- Health benefits (n=1)
- Upward mobility (n=1)

The Job (n=18)

- Job experience (n=11)
- Job offer/convenience (n=7)
- Job preparation (n=5)
- Best job with degree (n=1)

Enjoyed Practicum/Completed Field Placement (n=7)

- Enjoyed the field experience (n=3)
- Practicum experience (n=1)
- Supportive field instructor (n=1)
- Senior practicum (n=1)
- It is where internship was completed (n=1)

Location (n=2)

- Liked the atmosphere at Franklin County; wanted to stay in the Columbus area (n=1)
- Location (n=1)

Other (n=6)

- Staff (n=1)
- Networking (n=1)
- Fulfill UPP requirements (n=1)
- Wider demographic of clientele (n=1)
- Complete the program (n=1)
- Familiarity with agency (n=1)

No response (n=1)

Appendix I

Field Instructors – Explanations for satisfaction with UPP

Explain satisfaction with participation in the Title IV-E training program?

Areas of Satisfaction

- Students are well/better prepared (n=7)
 - Training program better prepared future hires for public child welfare.
 - It's almost like an orientation program that lasts 9 months. Students then start very well prepared.
 - They are eager and have the desire to work in Child Welfare.
 - The student was learning the same concepts as my new workers were and current workers have learned during their training.
 - Overall, the students/interns have been eager and good learners.
 - It seems this student is more equipped.
 - Well prepared students.
- Good relationship with campus coordinator and partnership between university and agency (n=4)
 - I have felt empowered to make suggestions to the Campus supervisor.
 - Good relationships with the field liaisons.
 - The program...also builds on the partnership between the universities and PCSA.
 - Good communication with field liaison.
- Appreciate interaction with other supervisors of interns (n=3)
 - Just having ongoing contact with other field placement providers is a benefit. itself. We know what each other is doing and share experiences.
 - Have attended UPP Supervisor meetings.
 - I find meeting with other supervisors...very valuable.
- Feel good about supervising interns/graduates (n=3)
 - I have enjoyed and grown from the experience...Field supervisors perform a valuable function...it is nice to have the opportunity to help prepare people for entry into the field.
 - I have been blessed with working with some of [the graduates] upon graduation and employment at the agency.
 - I have enjoyed having a student...Helping a student explore the area of child welfare and hoping that they have the same passion and/or find the same passion for this field as I have, has been very rewarding.

Areas of Dissatisfaction

- Evaluation is too academic (n=2)
 - ...the evaluation process...leans heavily toward the academic and not so much toward the practical...
 - I sometimes wish that the evaluation could change and be more user-friendly.
- Some students have maturity issues (n=1)
 - Some students/interns have exhibited some maturity issues and/or have not been as strong learners as most.

No response (n=5)

Appendix J
Field Instructors Suggestions for Improvements

What suggestions for improvement would you offer the child welfare training program?

Field Instructor Training (n=3; 6 suggestions)

- Training for field instructors to get more people to supervise.
- Field instructor training in terms of linking their course curriculum to practice.
- More work with supervisors.
- Statewide instructor meetings.
- Baseline program admission criteria.
- Flowing source of relevant news/educational information.

Evaluation Tie to Placement (n=6; 6 suggestions)

- Revamp the evaluation language so that it is user friendly for Field Instructors. Terms such as 'Social Unit'...are not particularly meaningful to the people who evaluate.
- Revamp the student evaluation.
- Evaluation tool--linked to the tool used by the field placement agency for caseworkers to help evaluate them the same as an entry level caseworker.

Other (n=6; 6 suggestions)

- More tie between the job paperwork and the class paperwork.
- If student wishes to attend grad school, extend UPP status.
- Give students more flexibility to be able to skip a class for an internship experience. There are a lot of opportunities that the student missed out on due to limitations in schedule.
- Closing feedback sessions between students and field supervisors.
- Criminal background checks.
- Don't allow problem students to continue.

No recommendations made (n=11)