

# CHILD WELFARE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

# UPP

The Ohio Child Welfare University Partnership Program (UPP) is a product of collaboration among ODJFS, PCSAO, the OCWTP, 8 Public Ohio Universities, and 88 Ohio Counties. The UPP builds a high quality child welfare workforce, one student at a time.

# 2013 DATA



# 72 TOTAL CURRENT STUDENTS



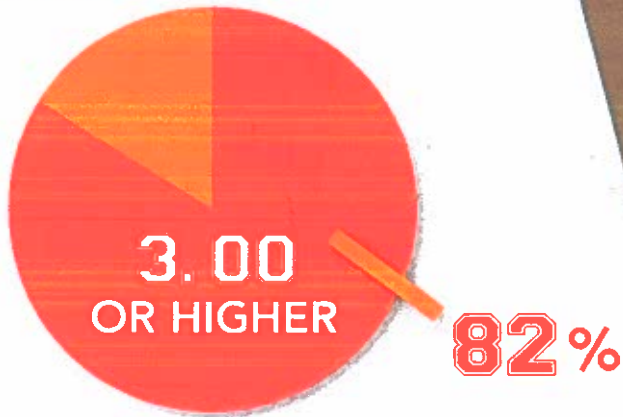
# 65 BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK

# 7 MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

# 234

TOTAL  
PROGRAM  
GRADUATES

**GPA** OF PROGRAM  
GRADUATES



# CHILD WELFARE UPP

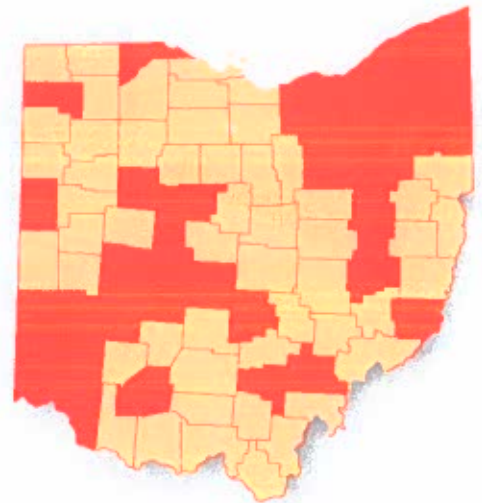
# SINCE 2009

62% 82%  
BSW MSW

GRADUATES  
HIRED

# 36

COUNTIES  
HAVE HIRED  
UPP GRADUATES



## UPP STUDENTS -

- "Don't need CORE Training"
- "Understand the 'real world' of child welfare"
- "Know CAPMIS"
- "Know SACWIS"
- "Have great writing ability"
- "Already know skill level"
- "Are ready to hit the ground running"

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT  
THE UPP PROGRAM COORDINATORS

University of Cincinnati  
Jan Melcher  
melchej@ucmail.cu.edu

University of Akron  
Melissa McCollister  
mkm12@uakron.edu

University of Toledo  
George Thompson  
george.thompson@utoledo.edu

Wright State University  
Jo Ellen Layne  
joellen.layne@wright.edu

Cleveland State University  
Linda Crowell  
l.f.crowell@csuohio.edu

The Ohio State University  
Linda Helm  
helmchain@aol.com

Ohio University  
Tracy Pritchard  
prtchar@ohio.edu

Youngstown State University  
Phyllis Johnson  
pjohnson@my.ysu.edu

# 2013 UPP EVALUATION

## Table of Contents:

Methodology	4
Database Findings	6
Bivariate Analyses	8
Field Placements	9
Hiring Agencies	10
Case Study Data	11
Focus Groups	16

## Introduction

This is the 2013 program evaluation report for the Ohio Child Welfare University Partnership Program (UPP). It includes quantitative descriptive data about University Partnership Program (UPP) outputs, a case study analysis of the eight participating University programs, and a summary of eight focus groups conducted by the program coordina-

tor to ensure program quality. Data in this report is from the UPP database, UPP case studies, and focus groups. UPP Campus Coordinators are responsible for ensuring data in the database is current and accurate. The information contained in this report is only as accurate as the data entered into the database.

## UPP Student Trajectory since 2009

University	Database Records since 2009	Current Students	Total students since 2009 (not including current students)	Graduates		Graduates Gaining Employment at an Ohio PCSA		Completed Commitment** (% out of total gaining employment)		Still Employed (% of those who gained employment)		UPP Graduates who have terminated the program prior to completing	
				Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
CSU	38	11	27	26	96%	4	15%	0	0%	3	75%	4	15%
OU	51	12	32	28	88%	19	68%	6	21%	14	74%	13	46%
OSU	69	14	55	52	95%	39	75%	22	42%	32	82%	13	25%
UA	41	8	28	23	82%	15	65%	8	35%	11	73%	5	22%
UC	48	8	37	34	92%	23	68%	10	29%	19	83%	9	26%
UT	33	9	23	17	74%	11	65%	1	6%	9	82%	5	29%
WSU	39	6	29	27	93%	21	78%	2	7%	14	67%	5	19%
YSU	38	4	30	27	90%	17	63%	7	26%	15	88%	5	19%
Total	357 *24 not admitted	72	261	234	90%	149	64%	56	24%	117	78%	59	25%
				33	14%	27	18%	12	21%	19	16%		
BSW*		65	202	202		125	62%	44	36%	96	80%		
MSW*		7	33	33		27	82%	12	43%	19	68%		
1 Year*		57	190	190		119	63%	47	40%	92	77%		
2 Year*		15	41	41		29	71%	9	31%	21	72%		

\*Numbers of BSW, MSW, 1 year & 2 year programs may not total numbers above because of missing data and in some cases students completed both a BSW and an MSW.

\*\* Many students are still actively completing their commitment.

## UPP Database

Data was extracted from the UPP database on October 1, 2013. The eight Campus Coordinators enter data into this web-based tool regarding incoming students, field placement, graduation, employment and program completion. The database was launched in 2009, therefore, analysis of database records is limited to those students who began the UPP program in 2009 and after. The database houses many records for students admitted prior to 2009, but because there was no formal tracking mechanism for those records, the available information for that

time period is often incomplete. In addition to reporting routine descriptive statistics, analyses were conducted to answer the following questions:

- Is there a relationship between GPA and program completion?
- Is there a relationship between type of degree and retention?
- Is there a relationship between University and program completion?
- Is there a relationship between University and retention?

## UPP Administrator Focus Groups

The purpose of focus groups with UPP students was to gather information on all facets of the program from the student interns' perspectives and to elicit suggestions for improvements. The focus groups were conducted at each of the 8 Universities between March of 2013 and May of 2013 by the State UPP Coordinator, who is employed on contract by the Institute for Human Services (IHS).

The facilitator asked open-ended questions on these topics:

- The process in place for admittance to the program
- The students' reasons for enrolling in UPP
- Child welfare course work and integration with field placement
- The field placement experience
- Role of the Campus Coordinator
- Career plans

University	# Focus Group Participants			Field Placement Agencies
	Jr	Sr	MSW	
University of Akron	1	3		Summit County Children Services Stark County Department of Job & Family Services
University of Cincinnati		9	1	Builer County Department of Job & Family Services Hamilton County Department of Job & Family Services Montgomery County Department of Job & Family Services Preble County Department of Job & Family Services
Cleveland State University		7		Cuyahoga County Department of Children & Family Services
Ohio University		6	1	Athens County Children Services Belmont County Department of Job & Family Services Fairfield County Department of Job & Family Services Monroe County Department of Job & Family Services Muskingum County Children Services
Ohio State University		5	8	Delaware County Department of Job & Family Services Franklin County Children Services Richland County Children Services Union County Department of Job & Family Services
University of Toledo		4		Lucas County Children Services Ottawa County Department of Job & Family Services Wood County Department of Job & Family Services
Wright State University		8		Clark County Department of Job & Family Services Champaign County Department of Job & Family Services Greene County Department of Job & Family Services Miami County Children Services Montgomery County Department of Job & Family Services
Youngstown State University	2	5		Mahoning County Children Services Trumbull County Children Services
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>60</b>

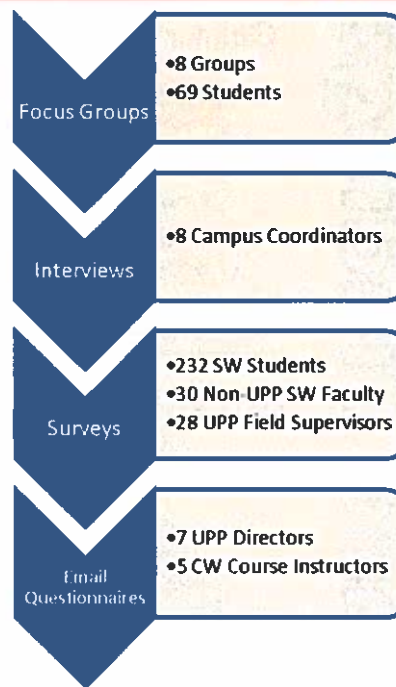
## UPP Case Studies

The UPP case study activities were conducted from March of 2012 through December of 2012 with the intent to increase the understanding of program operations at each of the eight Universities, including similarities and differences in program operations and components. Focus groups, surveys, email interviews, and face-to-face interviews were used to determine how University practices were similar and different in the following areas:

- Recruitment of UPP students
- Application process
- Field Placement Practices
- Acceptable field placement activities
- Engagement Skills Practice
- Assessment Skills Practice
- Hiring Process

- Program value within the social work department
- Student Performance
- UPP Program Communication Practices
- UPP course structure

Case studies were conducted on each of the eight UPP Universities to answer these questions. In addition to reviews of course syllabi, recruitment materials, field placement manuals, and field course materials, data was collected by a research assistant under the oversight of the Institute for Human Services. Data sources and number of participants are outlined below. All data was triangulated to present a comprehensive picture of the complete practice at each of the eight Universities.

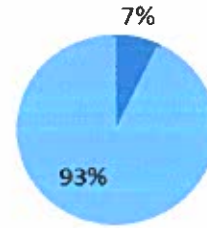


OU	OSU	UT	YSU	WSU	UA	UC	CSU
65 Student Surveys	59 Student Surveys	16 Student Surveys	24 Student Surveys	24 Student Surveys	14 Student Surveys	24 Student Surveys	2 Student Surveys
2 Faculty Surveys	8 Faculty Surveys	2 Faculty Surveys	2 Faculty Surveys	3 Faculty Surveys	2 Faculty Surveys	2 Faculty Surveys	2 Faculty Surveys
1 CW Course Instructor	1 CW Course Instructor	1 CW Course Instructor	1 CW Course Instructor		1 CW Course Instructor		1 CW Course Instructor
3 Field Supervisors	4 Field Supervisors	3 Field Supervisors	3 Field Supervisors	3 Field Supervisors	2 Field Supervisors	4 Field Supervisors	3 Field Supervisors
11 Current UPP Students	14 Current UPP Students	6 Current UPP Students	9 Current UPP Students	11 Current UPP Students	6 Current UPP Students	8 Current UPP Students	4 Current UPP Students

### Gender of UPP Students since 2009

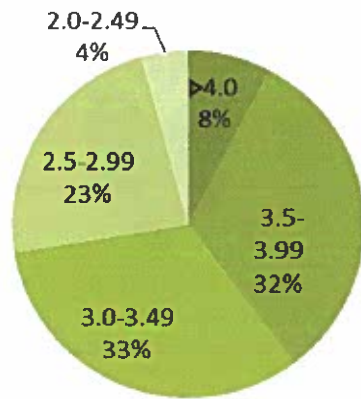
Gender		%	NASW (2003)
Male	24	7%	20%
Female	308	93%	79%
Total n=*	332		

■ Male ■ Female



\*332 reflects the number of students admitted to the program with data on gender available in the UPP database.

### GPA of UPP Students since 2009



GPA	#	%
>4.0	26	9%
3.5-3.99	94	37%
3.0-3.49	92	38%
2.5-2.99	63	27%
2.0-2.49	11	5%
Total n=*	286	

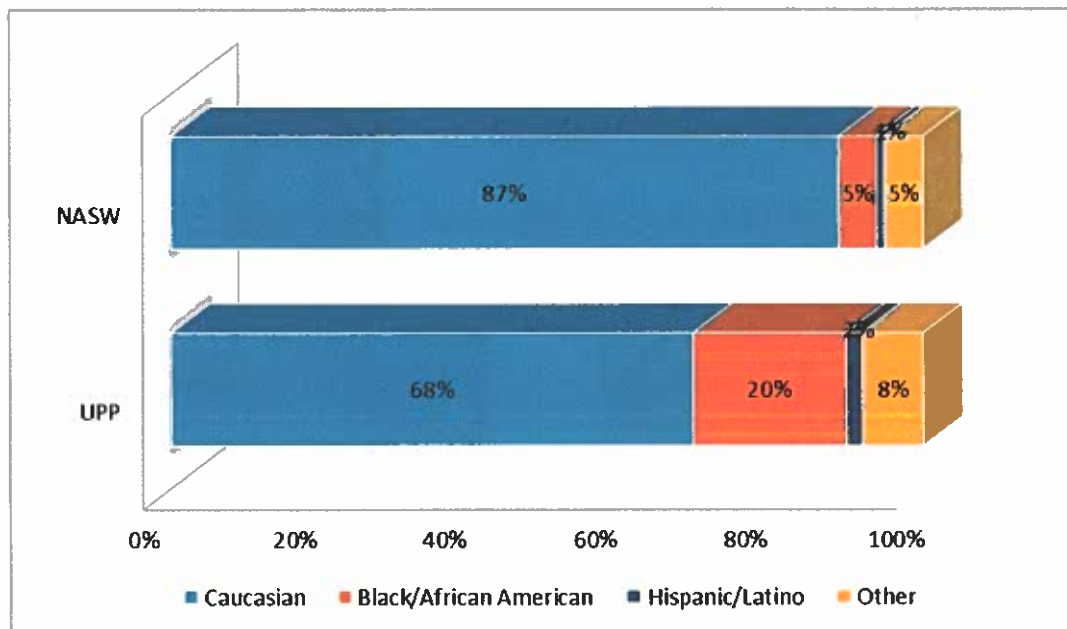
\*286 reflects the number of students admitted to the program with data on GPA available in the UPP database.

### Race/Ethnicity of UPP Students since 2009

University	Black or African American		Caucasian/White (Non-Hispanic)		Hispanic or Latino		American Indian or Alaska Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		African		Multi-racial		Un-known		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
CSU	13	33%	17	44%	3	8%	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%	1	3%	3	8%	39
OU	1	2%	29	67%	2	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%	10	23%	44
OSU	19	28%	49	71%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	69
UA	5	14%	27	75%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	8%	36
UC	9	19%	33	69%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%	1	2%	48
UT	7	23%	22	71%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	2	6%	0	0%	31
WSU	5	14%	28	78%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	1	3%	0	0%	36
YSU	7	21%	25	76%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	33
Total*	66	20%	230	68%	8	2%	1	0%	1	0%	4	1%	7	2%	17	5%	336
NASW (2003)		5%		87%		1%		1%		2%						2%	

\*n= 336, 336 reflects the number of students admitted to the program with data on race available in the UPP database since 2009.

## Comparison of UPP Racial Composition to NASW Racial Composition since 2009



## Trajectory of UPP Students in 1 and 2 year programs since 2009

University	Program Length	N Gained Employment	N Still Employed	% Still Employed
WSU	1-year program	9	7	78%
	2-year program	11	7	64%
UT	1-year program	5	2	40%
	2-year program	7	5	71%
OU	1-year program	14	12	86%
	2-year program	4	3	75%
OSU	1-year program	38	27	71%
	2-year program	1	1	100%

## Comparison of UPP programs with 1 & 2-year options or BSW & MSW options

Ohio University, University of Cincinnati, Wright State University, and the University of Toledo offer program participants the option to participate in the UPP program as a junior and senior or to participate in the program as a senior only. The 1-year BSW designation refers to the senior program. The 2-year BSW designation

refers to the junior and senior program. Similarly, Ohio State University, Ohio University, University of Cincinnati, and University of Toledo, offer the UPP program to Master's Students. At Ohio State University, University of Cincinnati and University of Toledo, Master's students can participate in the UPP program for one or two years.

### Ohio University

	1-year BSW		2-year BSW		BSW Total		MSW Total	
Graduates	18	%--	7	%--	25	%--	2	%--
Gained employment	13	72%	4	57%	17	68%	2	100%
Still employed	11	85%	3	75%	14	82%	2	100%

### University of Cincinnati

	BSW Total		MSW Total	
Graduates	28	%--	6	%--
Gained employment	20	71%	5	83%
Still employed	18	90%	4	80%

### The Ohio State University

	BSW		MSW		BSW/MSW	
Graduates	26	%--	22	%--	2	%--
Gained employment	20	77%	18	82%	1	50%
Still employed	16	80%	12	67%	1	100%

### Wright State University

	1-year BSW		2-year BSW		BSW Total	
Graduates	15	%--	13	%--	28	%--
Gained employment	9	60%	12	92%	21	75%
Still employed	7	78%	7	58%	14	67%

### University of Toledo

	1-year BSW		2-year BSW		BSW Total		2-year MSW	
Graduates	5	%--	12	%--	17	%--	1	%--
Gained employment	4	80%	6	50%	10	59%	1	100%
Still employed	2	50%	5	83%	7	70%	0	0%

# Bivariate Analyses

Bivariate analyses were conducted to test the following hypotheses:

1. There is a relationship between University and program completion.
2. There is a relationship between county of hire and employment retention.
3. There is a relationship between type of degree (BSW or MSW) earned and employment retention.
4. There is a relationship between University and employment retention.
5. There is a relationship between type of program (1 or 2 year) and employment retention.
6. There is a relationship between Student GPA and employment retention.

Only the hypothesis regarding the relationship between University and program completion was supported by this analysis. All other hypotheses could not be accept-

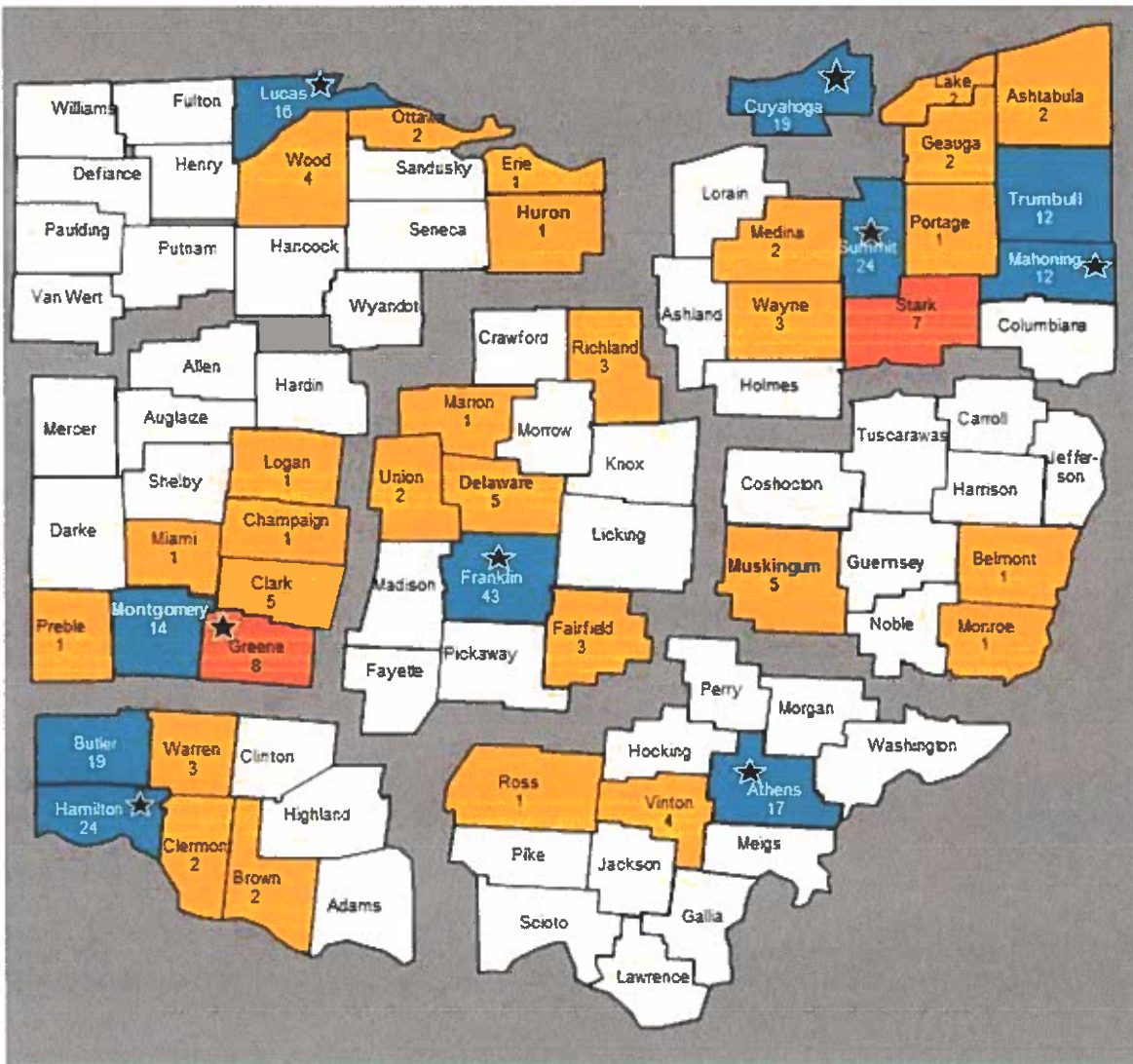
ed, meaning, there was no relationship between any of the identified variables.

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between University and program completion. The relation between these variables was significant,  $\chi^2(6, N = 56) = 29.799, p < .01$ . This suggests that students attending certain universities were more likely to complete UPP program requirements. Further exploration is necessary to determine the reason for this effect. It is likely that this effect could be due to more accurate student tracking at some Universities.

When examining the percentage of students who are still employed by degree or program type, it appears there is a slight difference, this analysis confirms that there is no difference on retention by degree or program type.

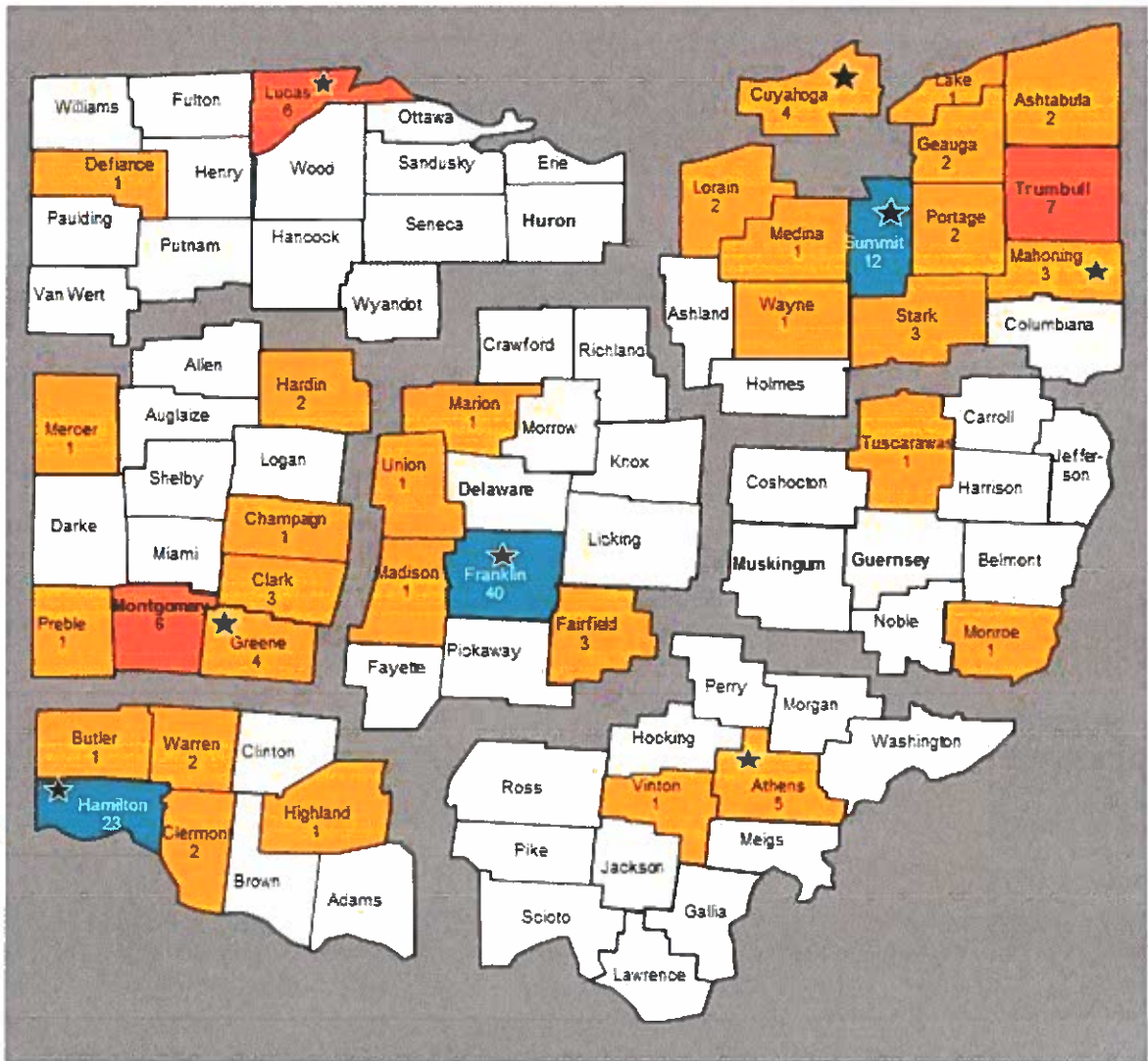


# Field Placements since 2009



Agency	# of students	Agency	# of students	Agency	# of students
Ashtabula	2	Greene	8	Portage	1
Athens	17	Hamilton	24	Preble	1
Belmont	1	Huron	1	Richland	3
Brown	2	Lake	2	Ross	1
Butler	13	Logan	1	Stark	7
Champaign	1	Lucas	16	Summit	24
Clark	5	Mahoning	12	Trumbull	12
Clermont	2	Marion	1	Union	2
Cuyahoga	19	Medina	2	Vinton	4
Delaware	5	Miami	1	Warren	3
Erie	1	Monroe	1	Wayne	3
Fairfield	3	Montgomery	14	Wood	4
Franklin	43	Muskingum	5	<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>
Geauga	2	Ottawa	2		

Counties Hiring UPP Graduates since 2009



County	# of Grads	County	# of Grads	County	# of Grads
Ashtabula	2	Guernsey	1	Monroe	1
Athens	5	Hamilton	23	Montgomery	6
Butler	1	Hardin	2	Portage	2
Champaign	1	Highland	1	Preble	1
Clark	3	Lake	1	Stark	3
Clermont	2	Lorain	2	Summit	12
Cuyahoga	4	Lucas	6	Trumbull	7
Defiance	1	Madison	1	Tuscarawas	1
Fairfield	3	Mahoning	3	Union	1
Franklin	40	Marion	1	Vinton	1
Geauga	2	Medina	1	Warren	2
Greene	4	Mercer	1	Wayne	1
				<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>

Data from focus groups, surveys, email and telephone interviews was triangulated to develop an understanding of UPP operations at all eight Universities. In general, recruitment, selection, placement, hiring, and course structure varied among the universities. Common and unique program elements are outlined below.

Key stakeholder perception of the program is also presented. This includes University staff and faculty perception of UPP, and faculty and Field Supervisors' perception of student preparedness. In general, UPP directors and non-UPP faculty have positive perceptions of the UPP. UPP Field Supervisors often found UPP students to be well-prepared for hire.

## Recruitment of UPP Students

### Common recruitment practices:

- All Campus Coordinators visit Sophomore or Junior Classes to present information about the UPP
- 7 Campus Coordinators use posters, flyers or other materials to advertise the program
- 5 Campus Coordinators communicate with non-UPP faculty about UPP
- 5 Campus Coordinators communicate with students via listservs

### Social Work Faculty recognized the following UPP recruitment activities:

- Campus Coordinators talk to students in all Social Work classes
- Information about UPP is provided during pre-social work courses
- Brochures and flyers
- UPP information is presented during student advising
- UPP information is provided during Social Work student orientation
- UPP information is included in Social Work department websites

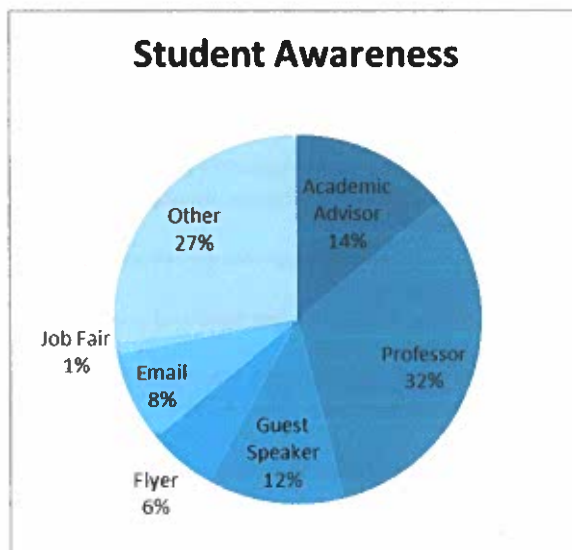
### Social Work Student program awareness:

- 23% of Non UPP students took one or more of the CW courses
- 41% Knew of the UPP

### Unique recruitment practices:

- 1 Campus Coordinator hosts a recruitment event
- 1 Campus Coordinator hosts UPP informational meetings
- 1 Campus Coordinator attends student orientation

## Student Awareness



## Application Process

### Common application activities:

- All use the standard UPP application with case scenarios
- All complete interviews with students

### Unique application activities:

- 2 Campus Coordinators use a rubric to score the applications

- 1 Campus Coordinator has field supervisors score the applications
- 1 Campus Coordinator does not accept students with a GPA below 3.5
- Students at two universities thought the application process was competitive
- 1 Campus Coordinator uses an activity during the interview in which students are asked to describe their perceptions of pictures of different situations.

## Applicant Screening Criteria

- GPA (3)
- Understanding of Child Welfare (3)
- Personal Statement (3)
- Experience (2)
- Emotional Stability (2)
- Sincerity
- Ties to commitment
- Academic Record
- Past Job and Volunteer
- Maturity
- Strong belief people can change
- Interest in Child Welfare
- Family/Personal History
- References
- How students respond to questions
- Long-term traits
- Proper Documentation
- Proper Grammar
- Campus Coordinator Instinct
- Diversity
- How well the student seems to fit with Social Work

## Field Placement Practices

### Common Field Placement Process:

- At all eight Universities, students identify their top choices
- Most students get their first choice
- Seven Universities notify students of placement acceptance immediately

### Unique Field Placement Process:

- 4 Campus Coordinators schedule placement interviews
- 2 Campus Coordinators provide some assistance with scheduling placement interviews
- 2 Campus Coordinators require students set up

### Field Supervisors reported the following personal or professional benefits to being a field supervisors

1. Stipend (some agencies compensate Field Supervisors with a stipend)
2. Personal professional development
3. Teaching and seeing students grow
4. Having a pool of qualified, trained applicants

## Acceptable Field Placement Activities

### Common Field Placement Activities:

- Student interns do many activities done by a paid caseworker
- Caseworkers review and approve documentation and activities
- All are permitted to have supervised and unsupervised client contact
- Most students are permitted to view records and practice entering data into SACWIS.

### Unique Field Placement Activities:

- Students at 2 Universities identified they carry their own cases
- Students at 1 University indicated that they could "follow" cases independently

### Common Engagement skills practice activities:

- Attend home visits
- Lead home visits
- Observe and conduct interviews
- Most have face-to-face and telephone interactions with families

## Engagement Skills Practice

### Opportunities to develop skills in engaging clients in the caseworker relationship:

- Process a recording of the student engaging a client with a Field Supervisor
- Field Supervisor or caseworker practices engagement skills with the student
- Attend training on engagement

- Initial engagement with a family—initiating first contact, conducting first interviews
- Shadowing case workers in the field
- Assigned as co-workers on cases, do the primary work, but always in the presence of an agency worker
- Home visits
- Supervision
- Client contact via face-to-face, telephone, email and text messaging
- Participate in family team meetings
- Conduct interviews

## Assessment Skills Practice

### Common Assessment skills practice activities:

- Observe assessments
- Most have opportunity to complete assessment in second semester
- Most are able to conduct family and safety assessments with supervision

### Unique Assessment skills practice activities:

- Students from three Universities thought they would benefit from more assessment practice

### Field Supervisors frequently identified the following assessment practice opportunities:

- Safety assessments
- Shadowing caseworkers
- Family assessments
- Preparation for case planning
- Reunification assessments
- Home visits

## Hiring Process

### Common hiring support activities:

- Students select the agencies at which they are most interested in working
- 7 Campus Coordinators notify students of job openings

### Unique hiring support activities:

- 1 Campus Coordinator makes first contact with hiring agency HR
- 4 Campus Coordinators contact agency HR to identify openings
- 4 Campus Coordinators require students to conduct all steps in the job seeking process
- Students from 5 Universities have help from Field Supervisors with the application process

## Program Value within the Social Work Department

### Program value within the social work department

- Highly valued by SW departments
- Popularity is growing

### Non-UPP Faculty Perception

- 94% of Non-UPP faculty surveyed knew about the UPP
- 89% of Non-UPP faculty surveyed could identify ways in which the UPP program was promoted
- 89% of Non-UPP faculty surveyed had a positive opinion about the UPP program

### Non-UPP faculty identified the following expectations of the UPP program:

- Students develop an understanding of child welfare
- Students become advocates for the child welfare system
- Students be better prepared for work in the child welfare system
- Students gain employment at Public Children Service Agencies

## Communication Practices

- 6 Campus Coordinators have weekly communication with students
- 6 Campus Coordinators have routine communication with major counties near their University
- E-mail is a frequent method of communication for all Campus Coordinators
- Campus Coordinators communicate with field supervisors most frequently via email; however, they routinely use face-to-face and telephone contact.
- Campus Coordinators communicate with UPP Directors weekly, monthly or several times a year

## Student Performance

The following reasons were provided for not hiring UPP students:

- No openings
- No opportunity to hire yet because are currently supervising their first student

*82% of UPP Field Supervisors believed the UPP interns were prepared for hire (n= 28).*

UPP field supervisors indicated what percentage of UPP students they would hire

12 % would have hired 50% or less of the UPP students they have supervised	16% would have hired between 60 and 70% of the students they supervised	12% would have hired between 75 and 80% of the UPP students they supervised	32% would have hired between 85 and 90% of the UPP students they supervised	32% would have hired more than 90% of the UPP students they supervised
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Field Supervisors frequently identified the following reasons for hiring UPP students:

- Writing ability
- Students are ready to "hit the ground running"
- They know SACWIS
- They know CAPMIS
- They don't need CORE training
- They understand the "real world" of child welfare work
- Field supervisors already know students' skill level

# Course Structure

## Child Welfare I

### Attendance Policy

- Most Universities include attendance in the final course grade
- 3 Universities will give a student an "F" for missing excessive classes
- 2 Universities explicitly state that attendance is mandatory

### Testing

Universities use a combination of the following testing procedures to evaluate student knowledge acquisition:

- 5 Universities have a final exam
- 4 Universities have a midterm exam
- 2 Universities use 2-3 quizzes throughout the course
- 1 University requires weekly quizzes

### Course Reading Requirements

- All Universities require the Field Guide to Child Welfare
- 7 Universities require additional readings
- 2 Universities require the same additional readings
- Outside of the 2 Universities identified

above, there is no consistency across Universities regarding the required readings

- Topics for additional readings include:
  - ◊ Evidence-based practice
  - ◊ Engagement
  - ◊ Domestic Violence
  - ◊ Substance Abuse
  - ◊ Mental Health
  - ◊ Child Welfare
  - ◊ Working with adolescents in foster care
  - ◊ Retention of child welfare workers
  - ◊ Sexual abuse
  - ◊ Neglect
  - ◊ Maternal support
  - ◊ Adolescent sex offenders
  - ◊ Risk assessment
  - ◊ Abuse and neglect fatalities
  - ◊ Stress and coping model of child maltreatment
  - ◊ Risk and protective factors
  - ◊ Feminist approach to child welfare
  - ◊ Attachment and loss
  - ◊ African American families in therapy
  - ◊ Cultagrams
  - ◊ Placement experience
  - ◊ Racial disproportionality
  - ◊ Ethics
  - ◊ Family policy
  - ◊ Gay and lesbian youth
  - ◊ Interviewing
  - ◊ AIDS
  - ◊ Cultural competence
  - ◊ Intake and assessment
  - ◊ Concurrent planning
  - ◊ Motivational interviewing

## Child Welfare I Assignments

- 5 Universities require students to complete a case assessment of some type
- 2 Universities require students to participate in a debate and write a paper on debate
- Unique assignments:
  - ◊ Values paper
  - ◊ Discussion board posts
  - ◊ Pre-service training & reflection paper on working with families
  - ◊ Culture presentation
  - ◊ Historical society paper
  - ◊ Case plan
  - ◊ Interview of child welfare worker and paper
  - ◊ Movie reflection on ethics

## Child Welfare II

### Attendance Policy

- Most Universities include attendance in the final course grade
- 4 Universities will give a student an "F" for missing excessive classes
- 2 Universities explicitly state that attendance is mandatory

### Testing

With the exception of one University that only gives a final exam, Universities use a combination of the following testing procedures to evaluate student knowledge acquisition:

- 5 Universities have a final exam
- 3 Universities have a midterm exam
- 2 Universities test on child development and a test on separation and placement
- 2 Universities use 2-3 quizzes throughout the course
- 1 University uses weekly quizzes

### Course Reading Requirements

- All Universities require the Field Guide to Child Welfare
- All Universities require additional readings
- 3 Universities require very similar additional readings- these include:
  - ◊ Bolby (1970) readings on Attachment, Separation and Loss

- ◊ Fahlberg (1969) readings on Attachment, Separation and Placement
- 2 Universities require the following additional readings:
  - ◊ Dave Pelzer series
  - ◊ Antwone Fisher
- Outside of the two Universities identified above, there is no consistency across Universities of the required readings
- Topics for additional readings include:
  - ◊ Developmental disabilities
  - ◊ Attachment
  - ◊ Multi-systems approach
  - ◊ Trauma
  - ◊ Child welfare staff retention
  - ◊ Re-entry in child welfare
  - ◊ Children of color
  - ◊ Foster care adjustment
  - ◊ Visitation
  - ◊ Siblings and out-of-home placement
  - ◊ Importance of biological families
  - ◊ Kinship care
  - ◊ Child development
  - ◊ Permanency planning
  - ◊ Foster care system

## Child Welfare II Assignments

- 3 Universities use a life book assignment
- 2 Universities use a research paper on child abuse and neglect and developmental disabilities
- Additional assignments required by one University
- Paper on secondary traumatic stress
- Safety Assessment
- Family Assessment
- Resource Guide & Presentation
- Discussion board posts
- Case application briefs
- Research term paper
- Case scenario
- Paper and oral presentation (topic unspecified)

UPP Administrator Focus Groups

For each focus group topic, the author has summarized the common points and responses made by a majority of the students under the caption of "Trends". This term indicates a summary of the ideas or positions of a majority of the focus group participants across the state.

In each section, the author also provides an "Analysis" comment. Generally, the author

intends for these comments to clarify or provide additional information to add context to the "Trends" listing. The "Analysis" sections may also reflect the opinion of the author.

Actual quotations from focus group participants are utilized throughout the report. Generally, these quotes express a point or opinion held by a large number of students, or provide a perspective or suggestion worthy of note.

**Admittance to the UPP**

Referred By				Screening/Application Process*					
Professor		CC Direct or Class Presentation		UPP Student		Interviews		Application Form	
15	25%	38	63%	9	15%	93	93%	60	100%

n=60

\* All students who completed an interview also completed an application. All program participants completed an application.

**Trends**

**Recruitment/Referral**

- Recruitment activities carried out by Campus Coordinators continue to be the key factor in attracting students to UPP.
- Many students hear about the program from other professors or from materials the Campus Coordinators have prepared for general use. ("I heard about UPP at the University Orientation.")

**Application/Interview Process**

- All focus group participants recalled completing a written application form as part of the admission process for UPP.
- All but four respondents recalled completing an interview in addition to their application.

- Almost all students recall that the written application process included an application form, an essay and completing a case scenario exercise.
- At five of the eight Universities, the students indicated that the application process was "competitive".
- "When I learned about UPP I kept it to myself so others would not apply."

**Analysis**

- The universal use of a standard application form was noted at the eight Universities.
- Respondents at the majority of Universities saw the application process as competitive during the past school year. This rating of "competitive" (or not) tends to fluctuate from year to year. It is likely related to the number of students who are applying for UPP, rather than any drastic changes in approach by the Campus Coordinators.

**Reason for enrolling in the UPP**

The Scholarship Payment		Opportunity for Employment in Public Sector		Existing Interest in Child Welfare		Recruited/Attracted to Child Welfare	
16	27%	20	33%	32	53%	14	23%

n=60

\* Participants may cite more than one reason



### Trends

- Though the opportunity for employment was a significant motivation, over 50% of the students in this cohort came to the program with an existing interest in a child welfare career.
- A pertinent student comment: "I wanted to work with children. The money was an incentive and I liked that you had the opportunity to get hired."

### Analysis

- Students coming into UPP with an existing interest in child welfare appear to be a strong trend. For the past five years, a majority of focus group participants have listed this factor as a primary reason for enrolling in the program.
- Approximately 20% of UPP participants continue to be "attracted" to child welfare by contact with the Campus Coordinator. ("I was not sure about Children Services, but talking with \_\_\_\_\_ sparked my interest.")

*"I wanted to work with children. The money was incentive and I liked that you had the opportunity to get hired."*

## Child Welfare Courses

### General opinion of course:

#### Trends

- Students at all eight Universities viewed the Child Welfare I and Child Welfare II courses positively.
- Students appreciate the strong focus on relevant child welfare topics and the use of "real life" examples, including involvement in "role play".
- Typically, the courses are not seen as "difficult", but as more "practical" than other social work courses. ("The class work is more real life. I remember information more than from other classes.")
- Generally, the students appreciated hearing Instructors draw on their personal experiences in presenting information ("Applying the work is the key").
- Students from two schools mentioned that some of the material in CW II is "repetitive" of topics covered in other social work courses.

- The "Field Guide to Child Welfare" four (4) volume text was also generally viewed as informative and "useful". ("I saw the books on the shelves at the Agency. I will keep my books.")

#### Analysis

- The comments of these respondents reflect the continued popularity of the courses. Across the state, these classes are seen as valuable learning experiences.
- These UPP students represent a population of learners who value "role play" as a learning tool. The most appreciated Instructors are those who blend this technique into their teaching, or at minimum, ask "What would you do as the caseworker?" after presenting a "real life" child welfare scenario.

### Specific classroom lessons that directly relate to field placement work

#### Trends

- Focus Group respondents mentioned approximately 23 different lesson topics that directly related to field work. The most frequently mentioned were:
  - ◊ Techniques for identifying child abuse and neglect;
  - ◊ Assessment skills (including case planning);
  - ◊ Client engagement skills (including interviewing);
  - ◊ Stages of child development.
- Also mentioned as significant:
  - ◊ Points to consider in making placement decisions;

- ◊ The basics of good casework techniques;
- ◊ How to identify available community support services.

#### Analysis

- Each year, students generally identify the same key lessons in their coursework.
- This consistency from year-to-year indicates that there is likely a basic level of continuity among the UPP Instructors across Ohio in teaching these courses.

## Suggestions to improve integration of courses with field placement experience:

### Trends

- Students suggest that even more role play type activities would be appreciated. ("More interactive activities in class and less PowerPoints.");
- More exposure and attention to the details of SACWIS and CAPMIS;
- The text books are in need of updating;

- Students at two Universities suggest that it would be better for students to take both courses before the internship begins.

### Analysis

- The students strongly desire opportunities to practice casework skills in response to the "real life" scenarios.

## Role of the Field Instructor/Supervisor

(The PCSA Administrator who supervises the UPP Intern)

### Intern selection process and assignment to Field Instructor/Supervisor

#### Trends

- Depending on the University, students may list a minimum of three and as many as four Public Children Service Agencies (PCSA) as placement options.
- Almost 85% of focus group participants were successfully placed at their top choice field placement agency.
- Students at six of the eight Universities found the interview process for an internship position to be "competitive" and "tense". ("I had my game face on.")
- Approximately 70% of the students were assigned to a line level unit supervisor for field instruction. Though most of these were "Intake" or "Ongoing" Supervisors, some specialty area supervisors were also assigned students (e.g., "Assessment Supervisor",

"Adoption/Foster Care Supervisor", "Lead Training Supervisor"). Other students were assigned to Field Instructors who carried various titles (e.g., "QA Supervisor", "Agency Director", "Intake Caseworker").

#### Analysis

- Campus Coordinators played a key role in ensuring that most students were placed at their top choice agency option.
- Developing placement slots for UPP and managing the delicate process of matching interns with agencies is probably the greatest challenge faced by the Campus Coordinator.
- Success at this task involves a combination of communication skills, the ability to assess the strengths and weaknesses of interns in promoting a field placement match and establishing a good system for collaboration between University and Agency.

## Completion of the Learning Contract

### Trends

- All University Schools of Social Work require students to complete a standardized "learning contract" regardless of their field placement arrangement.
- Field Supervisors assisted UPP interns in the completion of this document, often with assistance from the Campus Coordinator.
- Students at all eight Universities reported being familiar with the "UPP Field Practicum Manual" and most found this to be a useful tool in completing the Learning Contract ("It was helpful").
- Students at only three schools reported familiarity with the document "Key Field Experience Activities for UPP Interns: A Guideline". (This is a resource document developed in 2011 by a multi-disciplinary work group, intended to bring more uniformity to the UPP internship experience).

- Students at five Universities reported that the process of completing the Learning Contract went relatively smoothly with assistance from Field Supervisors and Campus Coordinators. ("She made it simple.")
- Respondents from three Universities tended to find the process "confusing". ("I hate it. It asks what I need to learn when I don't know what I don't know.")

### Analysis

- Progress is being made in making the Learning Contract process a more positive experience, as reported this year at the majority of UPP schools.
- Renewed attention to the use of available resource tools (i.e., the "Manual" and the "Guideline") might also help in this regard.

## Role of Field Instructor/Supervisor in organizing internship and linking course to field work

### Trends

- Almost all interns reported having a positive experience with their Field Supervisors, indicating that they benefited from “good relationships” and “broad exposure” to the agency. (“My Field Supervisor wanted me to get what I needed out of the field experience and she followed through.”)
- Also, students at six universities noted deliberate attention to linking field experiences to course work.
- There was a mixed report on how well Field Supervisors “organized the internship”. At four schools the reports were positive (“There was a system in place”). Students at the other Universities reported less attention to organization. (The Field Supervisor was “helpful but unstructured”).
- Only approximately five focus group respondents reported a poor experience with their Field Supervisor. Typically this was due to the lack of Supervisor availability. (“I was my own supervisor. I had to

arrange things to do and had no exposure to other units.”)

- It was generally reported that “shadowing” experiences went well. Several students reported that they were assigned to “caseworker mentors” and that this technique worked well.

### Analysis

- A strong Intern-Field Supervisor relationship is the key to a successful placement. It is apparent that a large majority of UPP students had a positive experience in this regard.
- There continues to be a need to bolster the “organization” of the Field experience component. More widespread use of the “Key Field Experience Activities for UPP Interns: A Guideline” as a resource tool should help in meeting that objective.

“My Field Supervisor wanted me to get what I needed out of the field experience and she followed through.”

## Students’ suggestions for Field Instructors/Supervisors

### Trends

- The only common “trends” noted were the importance of having some “structure” for the internship and the value of utilizing “caseworker mentors”. One respondent even implied that the use of mentors could enhance “organization”. (“Assign a caseworker at start to work with intern for organization purposes.”)
- However, several individual focus group respondents offered unique, specific suggestions for Field Supervisors. For example:
  - ◊ “Let interns know up front what they are allowed to do.”
  - ◊ “More coordination” (with others involved in UPP).
  - ◊ “Have an interest in teaching.”

◊ “Orient the unit about UPP.”

◊ “More shadowing with a wider variety of caseworkers.”

### Analysis

- These are constructive suggestions that are worthy of attention.
- Campus Coordinators regularly schedule orientation and training for PCSA Field Supervisors, but attendance is irregular. If Field Supervisors attend training more regularly, additional consistency could be possible during the field placement experience.

## Field Placement Experience

### General thoughts on field experience (impressions, reactions)

#### Trends

- When asked to describe the internship experience in a word or a phrase, students used approximately 35 different adjectives or phrases in response. The two sentiments that were expressed most frequently about the internship:
- It was an “eye-opening” educational experience. (“All encompassing;” “I learned a lot.”)
- At the same time, the respondents rated this “challenging” learning experience as “exciting”, “enlightening”, and “amazing”.

- Almost all comments were positive (e.g., “valuable” “enriching”), but there were about three negative replies (e.g., “awkward;” “not helpful”).
- When asked who (by title) had the greatest positive influence on their internship, the Field Supervisors tallied the most votes by far. It was also noted that agency caseworkers provided a positive influence.

#### Analysis

- These very positive “general thoughts” on the field experience provide a good indicator of the students’ general satisfaction with UPP.

### The most valuable or dramatic learning experiences in the field placement

#### Trends

- The respondents in these focus groups described having been involved in over 38 distinct child welfare activities that they found to be “most valuable”.
- These ranged from “finding beds for a family” to seeing a teen at Juvenile court “locked in shackles”.
- The most frequently mentioned valued learning experiences were:
- Involvement in child removals/placements;
- Observing team meetings;

- Direct client contacts (e.g., “Going on an initial investigation with a caseworker”).

#### Analysis

- Most students seek a degree of independent activity or, at minimum, the opportunity to “practice” casework functions while being observed (e.g., “dealing with resistant clients, which is out of my comfort zone”).
- A number of interns noted that their field experiences affirmed their choice of child welfare career. (“I helped on a reunification and realized that this is what I wanted to do.”)

### Students’ suggestions to make field experience more meaningful

#### Trends

- Suggestions were made covering more than fifteen distinct areas. Several suggestions reflect the following common themes:
  - ◊ Allow interns to follow a case from start to finish.
  - ◊ Clarify policies regarding allowing interns to have direct involvement in cases.
  - ◊ Review the time allotted for the field experience. (“Two days a week is not enough.”)
- Other suggestions:
  - ◊ Have Supervisors make better use of the UPP Handbook.
  - ◊ Require Field Supervisors to be unit supervisors, not managers.
  - ◊ Do not require UPP students to take the University’s general field seminar, it is repetitive.
  - ◊ Provide general orientation to the agency.
  - ◊ Complete Child Welfare courses prior to completing the internship.
  - ◊ Have interns visit other counties (e.g., arrange to visit both large and small counties).
  - ◊ Provide broader exposure to the whole agency.
  - ◊ Establish uniformity of placement activities across county agencies.
  - ◊ Provide early training on SACWIS.
  - ◊ Address the issue of needing a client release form for intern involvement.

#### Analysis

- Following of a case from intake to service in ongoing (including child placements and court action, if applicable) has emerged as a top suggestion of interns over the past three years. The logistics of making this arrangement during the term of an internship might be challenging, but this option should be explored by the PCSA with the support of the Campus Coordinator.
- The concept of expanding the duration of the field placement or adjusting the schedule was frequently mentioned by this group. (“Might be better to have all class one half and then be an intern almost full time for 15 weeks.”) University administrators would likely need to be involved in review of these types of options.
- Several respondents also noted the need for more clarity and “uniformity” in UPP policy regarding direct client contacts by interns.
- The utilization of the “Key Field Experience Activities for UPP Interns: A Guideline” could benefit students and Field Supervisors and would serve to promote more consistency in the UPP internship experience statewide.
- Additionally, interns are looking for three basic components for a meaningful field experience: some structure; broad exposure to all agency departments; and strong and consistent supervision.

## Opinions on the Statewide Nature of the UPP

### Open to seeking PCSA employment

UPP has been designed to provide employment opportunities at Public Children Services Agencies (PCSA) across Ohio. Students were asked if they intended to take advantage of that feature of the program.

Statewide		Only in Local Region	
31	52%	25	42%

n=60

*“UPP benefits the agencies. We are more focused on wanting to learn about child welfare than the average social work student.”*

### Student Comments

- “Having the opportunity to move is good, but I have family ties.”
- “Some small counties pay very little. I could not pay my bills.”
- (I am open to moving)...“there is a need to reinforce the state wideness point with the county agencies.”
- “I’m very mobile.”
- “Counties should move more quickly to allow UPP students to apply. They lose students.”

### Analysis

- Probably understandably, students tend to focus their initial job search efforts to their region. Also, a significant number are “tied” to their local area by way of personal commitments.
- However, it is significant that over 50% of UPP students are open to exploring PCSA jobs across Ohio.

### Planning for a Child Welfare Career

#### Trends

- Concluding comments were very positive:
  - ◊ “I intend to get an MSW and go into supervision in child welfare.”
  - ◊ “UPP is awesome. Keep it going forever.”
  - ◊ “The experience of UPP is so beneficial that the money payment is just the cherry on the ice cream.”
  - ◊ “We feel special in UPP. Everyone else is going crazy in their field placements.”
  - ◊ “UPP benefits the agencies. We are more focused on wanting to learn about child welfare than the average social work student.”

Will seek PCSA case-work job		Aspire to Supervision		Interest in a MSW degree	
57	95%	39	65%	54	90%

n=60

“UPP is awesome.  
Keep it going  
forever.”

### Analysis

- 98% of these UPP participants intend to enter the child welfare field. This is a good indicator of program success.
- A significant interest in obtaining an MSW degree and aspiring to eventually become a supervisor is also noted.

# Role of the Campus Coordinator

## Benefits of group seminar with Campus Coordinator

### Trends

- According to students, the most often mentioned benefits of the seminar are:
  - ◊ Receiving feedback on field experiences and having the Campus Coordinator lead discussions to “link” class work and field work.
  - ◊ Receiving emotional support and discussing “self-care” issues
  - ◊ Obtaining information about the job market and how to prepare for employment interviews
- In general, students expressed positive opinions about the seminar experience.

### Analysis

- Campus Coordinators at five Universities conduct seminars exclusively with UPP students.
- At the other three schools, UPP students attend a seminar with a mix of social work students who have varying areas of concentration. This seminar may or may not be conducted by the Campus Coordinator.
- For the most part, the student respondents seemed satisfied with the seminar arrangement they happen to have at their school and do not seek to have an alternative format.

## How does the Campus Coordinator assist students

### Trends

- Students expressed positive perceptions of Campus Coordinators. They reported Campus Coordinators assisted students as follows:
  - ◊ Readily available for support and information (“Goes out of her way to help you”);
  - ◊ Diligent about making visits to the field placement site and advocating for the intern as appropriate. (Asks “What is the student doing good and what can she work on?”);

- ◊ Gives regular attention to linking class lessons to field experiences;
- ◊ Also, students at all eight schools indicated that they had a “good understanding” of the UPP Agreement as explained by the Campus Coordinator.

### Analysis

- Campus Coordinators show a deep commitment to their students and to UPP. The students recognize this commitment when they see it. (“She wants us to stretch and grow.”)

*(The Campus Coordinator) “Goes out of her way to help you.”*

*“He creates a positive environment.”*

## Suggestions for Campus Coordinator to improve the UPP experience

### Trends

- Students suggested that UPP could recruit more students if prospects were approached earlier and current UPP students were involved in the process.
- “Start talking to potential UPP students at freshman or sophomore year for them to better understand the program.”

### Analysis

- The general comments from these focus group respondents reflect a high degree of satisfaction with the Campus Coordinators. (“He creates a positive environment.”)