



2019 CWUPP EVALUATION



Prepared for the Institute of Human Services

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JUNE 2019

Executive Summary

We employed a mixed methods evaluation design to assess the degree to which the Ohio Child Welfare University Partnership Program (CWUPP) is achieving statewide program objectives. We utilized student surveys, supervisor focus groups, syllabi reviews, focus groups, and secondary data analyses to answer four research questions.

1. To what degree is there fidelity in CWUPP coursework across the eight participating CWUPP universities?
2. To what degree do technology-based learning labs facilitate job preparedness?
3. How many Ohio PCSAs accept interns and/or hire CWUPP graduates?
4. Are CWUPP program objectives being met?

Findings from student surveys, syllabi review, and focus groups suggest that there is increased consistency in CWUPP coursework over previous years. Many universities have implemented recommended child welfare syllabi, assignments and readings, however not all universities have. In addition, there is still substantial variation in student assessment scores. Notably, student scores in child development, assessment of safety, and placement improved from the previous year.

Findings from student surveys, supervisor surveys, and focus groups suggest that the technology-based learning labs are of benefit to CWUPP students and graduates, specifically in the areas of documenting key child welfare processes in the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS).

There was an increase in the number of counties accepting CWUPP interns and hiring CWUPP graduates and students reported being willing to seek employment at PCSAs outside of their county of residence, thus suggesting the reach of the CWUPP continues to grow.

Overall CWUPP appears to be achieving desired program objectives. CWUPP graduates are gaining employment at Ohio's PCSAs, and supervisors report that they are prepared to do the work.

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Introduction

Objective

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine if the Child Welfare University Partnership Program (CWUPP) is achieving established program goals. The goal of the CWUPP is to prepare graduates from public university social work programs for long-term careers in public child welfare. The purpose of the CWUPP is to positively influence recruitment and retention in public child welfare while increasing new staff's readiness to provide quality services to children and their families. When the CWUPP was founded, the steering committee and stakeholders hoped CWUPP would result in increased professionalization of the field of Child Welfare in Ohio.

We have four objectives for this research: (1) to assess the fidelity of child welfare coursework at the eight participating CWUPP universities; (2) to assess the degree to which technology-based learning labs facilitate job preparedness; (3) to assess the degree to which Public Children Services Agencies have utilized CWUPP interns and graduates; and (4) to assure program objectives are being met.

Background and Rationale

The following Background and Rationale were provided in the 2017-2018 CWUPP evaluation. Since the 2018-2019 evaluation builds upon the previous evaluation, there were minimal changes to the content. We have included it in this report to ensure readers have access to complete information when reading the evaluation.

For many years, public children services agency administrators have been challenged by locating and retaining a child welfare workforce that is skilled to do the complex job of assuring child safety and promoting child and family well-being. The cost of turnover to child welfare agencies can be quite costly. Estimates of the cost of child welfare vacancies range from \$10,000 (Graef & Hill, 2000) to over \$50,000 (National Child Welfare Workforce Institute, n.d.). Title IV-E University- Agency partnerships have emerged as one approach to address this challenge (Ausbrooks, Benton, Smith, & Wildeberger, 2014). These partnerships allow states to use Title IV-E dollars to support university social work programs that provide social work students with specialized knowledge and expertise in child welfare. Title IV-E of the Social Security Act

represents a large federal investment in child welfare training (Rheaume, Collins, & Amodeo, 2011) and forty states are using these dollars to support these programs.

Research has long demonstrated the benefits of these university-agency collaborations. In Kentucky, caseworkers who completed the Title IV-E program were more likely to perform federal and state best practices than caseworkers who did not complete the program (Barbee, et al., 2009). In her evaluation of the California Title IV-E university-agency partnership, Bagdasaryan (2012) found that MSW students who participated in the partnership's specialized education had greater child welfare knowledge than those who did not. Similarly, a study of BSW Title IV-E alumni found that these caseworkers were more likely to adhere to social work practice principles, had confidence in their abilities, and felt they were able to meet job expectations (Falk, 2015).

Research points to the positive effects of these partnerships on recruitment and retention (Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research, 2005) (Barbee, et al., 2009) (O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2009). In her longitudinal survey of over 289 Title IV-E program alumni, Falk (2015) found that the average attrition rate for program graduates was approximately 4.4% as compared to 7.8% for caseload carrying staff who did not participate in the program. The strengths of these university-agency collaborations have been identified by many states (Rheaume, Collins, & Amodeo, 2011). Through these partnerships, states have observed increased resource sharing amongst universities and agencies; positive working relationships between agencies and universities; increased access to convenient child welfare training; and enhanced professionalism of the workforce and increased recruitment and retention of the child welfare workforce.

Preparing Students for Careers in Child Welfare

In order to increase recruitment and retention of a skilled child welfare workforce, Ohio's public children service agencies, in collaboration with the Institute for Human Services, on behalf of the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, and the Public Children Services Association of Ohio began to explore implementing a Title IV-E university-agency partnership in Ohio in the late 1990's. By the early 2000's several public universities with accredited social work degree programs had agreed to partner with public children services agencies to provide a unique child welfare educational experience to increase the recruitment and retention of a skilled child welfare workforce. This program, the Child Welfare

University Partnership Program (CWUPP) accepted its first students at The Ohio State University in 2002, with the University of Toledo, Ohio University, and Wright State University joining to accept students in 2003. Since that time, the University of Cincinnati, Youngstown State University, the University of Akron, and Cleveland State University have joined the program, making the CWUPP available at eight of Ohio's public universities.

The CWUPP has been guided by a statewide steering committee to shape the curriculum and field experience of BSW and MSW social work students to assure program participants graduate prepared for a career in child welfare. Students in the program are required to complete two child welfare courses as part of their education, participate in a field placement at one of Ohio's 85 Public Children Service Agencies (PCSAs), gain employment at one of Ohio's PCSAs within six months of graduation, and complete one or two years of employment at the PCSA (depending on length of program commitment). In exchange for their commitment, students receive a one-time incentive. If a student fails to complete the required time commitment, they are required to repay some or all of the incentive to the CWUPP.

All participating universities are required to offer two child welfare courses that contain the same content as the mandatory Caseworker Core training provided to all new child welfare caseworkers in the State of Ohio. CWUPP graduates who complete the child welfare coursework are eligible to receive a waiver for participation in seven of the eight modules of Caseworker Core which reduces training and onboarding time for CWUPP graduates hired at PCSAs.

During the initial implementation of CWUPP, universities felt strongly that they should be permitted to maintain academic freedom as it pertains to the child welfare courses, while PCSAO and ODJFS desired standardization of course content across all participating universities. It was decided that the courses would use the same textbooks, however universities would maintain the freedom to supplement with additional readings, create assignments, and determine how much course time is allotted to each of the required topics. This ultimately resulted in substantial difference in child welfare coursework across the eight universities. The difference in course content likely resulted in inconsistencies of CWUPP graduates' preparation for work in child welfare. To resolve these discrepancies, the CWUPP steering committee began implementing attempts to reduce variability in graduate preparedness. Efforts included

the development of guidelines for field placement activities and syllabi review. Although these efforts were notable, barriers to implementation remained. Actual practice in each of Ohio's 88 PCSAs practices differs slightly, thus each internship experience differs. There is considerable variation in CWUPP university instructors' and coordinators' knowledge and expertise in child welfare, which contributes to variations in how they teach the courses.

In 2016, the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) revised half of the mandatory Caseworker Core training to include substantial content on several of the Child Welfare Best Practices adopted in Ohio's PCSAs in the last decade. The revision of these courses presented an opportunity to increase similarity of instruction across the CWUPP universities. To this end, the OCWTP developed new course syllabi to reflect the changes in content, the expected time to address each content portion, recommended assignments, and recommended readings for each topic. The OCWTP provided each university and all instructors with curricula, syllabi, assignments and rubrics, readings, and PowerPoint presentations. All CWUPP coordinators and instructors were required to attend a four-day training to learn the new content and establish a minimum foundation of expertise for CWUPP course instructors. CWUPP instructors agreed to begin implementing new content, assignments, and readings in the Autumn Semester of 2016. At the time, syllabi were reviewed for consistency by program evaluators and it was determined that a substantial amount of inconsistency still existed. In the Summer of 2017, both Child Welfare course syllabi were revised again to provide direction about the order and quantity of time to spend on each Caseworker Core module. The 2018 CWUPP evaluation pointed to continued need for improvement in course consistency across universities. Prior to the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic year, syllabi were again revised through a collaborative process with UPP Instructors, and an additional training was offered to instructors to support implementation consistency.

In addition to the change of content in the Child Welfare courses, the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) developed technology-based learning labs for new child welfare caseworkers to apply the skills and concepts learned in the workshops and prepare them to use the State's Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). The CWUPP steering committee felt strongly that CWUPP graduates should be skilled in use of SACWIS as part of their preparedness for their career in Child Welfare. Since university instructors may not be knowledgeable about SACWIS

and could not be expected to train those learning labs, it was decided that CWUPP students would be strongly encouraged, and at some universities, required, to complete the learning labs through the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program.

Significance

Since 2002, over 722 students have graduated from the CWUPP at one of the eight participating universities and 601 of those graduates have gained employment in 58 of Ohio's 88 counties. This illustrates the impact the CWUPP has on Ohio's Child Welfare workforce and subsequently children and families involved in Ohio's Child Welfare system.

Research Methods

Research Design.

We employed a mixed methods research design to answer the identified research questions.

1. To what degree is there fidelity in CWUPP coursework across the eight participating CWUPP universities?
2. To what degree do technology-based learning labs facilitate job preparedness?
3. How many Ohio PCSAs accept interns and/or hire CWUPP graduates?
4. Are CWUPP program objectives being met?

We utilized a one-group posttest-only design to partially answer research questions 1, 2 and 4. We surveyed CWUPP students who graduated in the Spring of 2019 to assess their level of knowledge on key child welfare concepts that are required in the course curricula and how prepared they feel to do entry level child welfare work. In addition, we asked specific questions about how the child welfare learning labs contributed to their feelings of preparedness.

To provide further insight into research questions 3 and 5 we conducted focus groups with CWUPP field supervisors. We asked field supervisors about CWUPP student intern preparedness for child welfare work and their perception of the preparedness of

CWUPP student interns as it specifically pertains to the use of child welfare specific technology.

We also utilized a longitudinal study design to answer research question 1. We surveyed CWUPP students who graduated in Spring of 2018 and Spring of 2019. We compared the results of the CWUPP student survey from 2018 to the results of the survey from 2019.

We conducted a focus group with CWUPP students at each of the eight universities. Focus group content was analyzed and themed and utilized to provide additional insight into each of the identified research questions. We triangulated focus group findings, student survey results, and supervisor survey results to answer research question two.

In addition to the surveys and focus groups outlined above, we conducted a document review of university syllabi for both child welfare courses to answer research question one. We reviewed the syllabi to determine consistency or discrepancy in required course readings, graded assignments, content, and time given to key concepts. We triangulated the results of the document review with student survey responses and focus group findings to answer research question one.

We utilized secondary data analysis to answer research questions three and four. Since 2009, CWUPP coordinators have utilized a statewide, shared database to track student application, admission to the program, field placement, employment status, program completion, and program termination if required. We conducted analyses on particular fields in this database to understand which PCSA's are hiring and or allowing CWUPP interns to be placed in their agency. We triangulated the data from the cohort survey, the document review, student focus groups, and the statewide database to determine if key program objectives are being met.

Sample.

Participants in this study include social work students who participated in the CWUPP at one of the eight participating CWUPP universities and child welfare supervisors who supervised a CWUPP intern in the 2018-2019 academic year. The student sample frame was students earning either their Master of Social Work or Bachelor of Social Work degree by completing the required child welfare coursework and field placement at an

Ohio PCSA. All CWUPP students who were graduating in 2019 were invited to complete the survey prior to graduation.

Thirty-eight students completed the student survey, a response rate of 61.3%. Although response rate is high, it is approximately 29% lower than the response rate of the previous year. Response rates varied by university (Table 1).

Table 1. Student Survey Response Rates

University	Number of students	Number of students completing survey	Response rate
Cleveland State University	8	2	25%
Ohio University	11	10	91%
The Ohio State University	13	2	15%
University of Akron	6	1	17%
University of Cincinnati	11	11	100%
University of Toledo	2	2	100%
Wright State University	8	8	100%
Youngstown State University	3	2	67%%
Total	62	38	61.3%

Sixty-one students participated in the student focus groups, a response rate of 98.4%.

We conducted eleven focus groups with a total of 34 field supervisors from 16 counties.

Measurement/Instrumentation

We collected data using both quantitative and qualitative instruments. The first instrument was a questionnaire for CWUPP students developed by the researchers to evaluate research questions 1, 2, 3 and 5. The questionnaire was designed to assess student knowledge of key child welfare concepts, student application of key child welfare concepts to case scenarios, and student perception of preparedness for a career in Ohio child welfare. We administered the 45-item questionnaire to all CWUPP students with senior status in the 2018-2019 academic year via electronic survey software. Students were invited to participate in the survey during class or seminar or on their own time. In 2019, we modified the questionnaire to include additional course-content questions and there were 53 items on the questionnaire. Forty-seven of the items on the questionnaire pertained to specific child welfare course content. The questionnaire is moderately reliable with a Cronbach's Alpha of .792. The questionnaire included items pertaining to key child welfare concepts introduced in CWUPP Child Welfare coursework specific to eight domains: Safety Assessment, Safety Planning, Family Assessment, Service Planning, Case Initiation, Child Development, Permanency, and Engagement.

The second source of data was university child welfare course syllabi. There are eight participating universities and each university is required to offer both a Child Welfare 1 course and a Child Welfare 2 course; in total there were 16 syllabi to review. The third data source is the data in the statewide shared database. Data for each student admitted to the CWUPP since 2002 is housed in this database.

The fourth data source for this evaluation was student focus groups conducted in the Fall of 2018 and Spring of 2019 at each of the eight participating universities. The statewide CWUPP coordinator conducted these focus groups.

The fifth data source for this evaluation was focus groups conducted with CWUPP field supervisors. Supervisor focus groups were conducted by the state coordinator to obtain feedback from CWUPP field supervisors in six key areas:

- Relevance of the CWUPP course work
- Field experience, including the learning plans
- Students preparedness for working in child welfare
- Value of the Learning Labs

- Campus coordination
- Areas for improvement

Research Question 1.

To what degree is there fidelity in CWUPP coursework across the eight participating CWUPP universities?

Methods. *Student surveys*

We coded each relevant student survey item as correct or incorrect and calculated an overall score and scores for each of the domains. We analyzed the scores via SPSS utilizing descriptive statistics, and ANOVA with post-hoc analysis. We calculated correlations between University and overall score and each domain to determine if there was a relationship between university attended and scores.

In addition, we utilized the student questionnaires administered in 2017-2018 and the questionnaires administered in 2018-2019. We conducted nonparametric analyses via SPSS to examine differences in CWUPP assessment scores by year.

Document review of syllabi

We conducted a document review of the syllabi for the eight CWUPP universities' child welfare courses. We sought to determine course comparability across universities by examining three components.

1. How much time did each university spend on each topic area?
2. What percentage of required student readings aligned with the recommended reading list?
3. What percentage of course assignments aligned with the recommended course assignments?

In the Summer of 2016, when portions of Caseworker Core were revised, the state training coordinator provided a recommended Child Welfare 1 syllabus to CWUPP instructors at a four-day-long training on course content. In the Summer of 2017, this syllabus was revised, and a recommended syllabus was created for both Child Welfare 1 and Child Welfare 2. Based on findings from the 2018 CWUPP evaluation, syllabi

were reviewed and revised and re-distributed to CWUPP universities in the Summer of 2018. These recommended syllabi, complete with timelines, course assignments, and readings were used as the basis for comparison. We analyzed each university syllabus to identify the number of weeks spent on each content area, the number of required readings that aligned with the recommended reading list, and the number of assignments that aligned with the recommended course assignments.

We analyzed focus groups conducted by the state CWUPP coordinator for additional insight into child welfare courses.

Results. *Student survey*

The average overall score for all students on the questionnaire items was 68.8%. The range of average scores for each domain is presented in Table 2. The average overall score in 2018 was 63%. Although the score has increased slightly, there is not a statistically significant difference between overall scores for the two evaluation years.

Table 2. Mean Student Assessment Scores

<i>Domain</i>	2018-2019	2017-2018
Overall	68.1%	63.6%
Safety Assessment	78.6%	62.2%
Risk Assessment	68.4%	70.39%*
Safety Planning	65.9%	65.6%
Case Initiation	82.9%	85.8%*
Service Planning	82.2%	80.1%
Placement	91.5%	80.6%
Child Development	65.5%	21.3%
Engagement	70.1%	78.7%*

We conducted a one-way ANOVA to determine if differences in scores by university were statistically significant. Only the ANOVA for Child Development was significant ($p < .05$) suggesting that there is difference in the Child Development scores by some universities. Post hoc analysis was not possible because more than one university had two or fewer respondents.

We compared the scores in each domain for the two academic years. We found a significant difference in scores for the Child Development domain, the Safety Assessment domain, and the Placement domain. These results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Assessment domain score differences.

Domain	Mean Difference	Significance
Child Development	44.15	.000
Safety Assessment	19.34	.014
Placement	10.88	.037

2017-2018 n = 73, 2018-2019 n = 38

We calculated correlations between area of practice and assessment scores overall and in each domain. There was not a significant relationship between area of practice and overall assessment. There was a small negative relationship between assessment/intake and initiation ($r = -.399, p < .05$). This small relationship indicates that students who were placed in assessment/intake were slightly more likely to provide incorrect answers on the questions related to case initiation on the CWUPP assessment.

We also examined relationships between placement activities and assessment scores. Multiple significant relationships were identified. These relationships are presented in Table 4. All but two relationships were positive. This suggests that there is small to moderate relationship between the nature of a student's field placement activities and their scores on the CWUPP student assessment. It should be noted, that three moderate-to-large relationships were identified. Students who observed, shadowed or completed a case initiation were 22% more likely to score higher on the safety planning items than those who did not. Students who observed implementation of a safety plan were 33.75% more likely to score higher on the safety planning items than those who

did not. Students who observed an interview with an alleged perpetrator were 40.8% more likely to score higher on the safety planning items than those who did not.

Two small-to-moderate negative relationships were identified. Both were related to the Reunification Assessment. Students who observed or completed a Reunification Assessment were 11.6% more likely to score lower on the overall assessment and 12.3% more likely to score lower on the placement items on the assessment than those who did not observe the Reunification Assessment.

Table 4. Correlation between placement activity and assessment scores

Placement Activity	Assessment Domain	Correlation
Family Assessment	Total Assessment Score	.361
Reunification Assessment	Total Assessment Score	-.340
Observation of Supervised Visit	Total Assessment Score	.399
Case initiation	Safety Planning	.470
Safety Assessment	Safety Planning	.329
Safety Plan	Safety Planning	.581
Interview with Alleged Perpetrator	Safety Planning	.639
Safety Plan	Initiation	.374
Family Assessment	Initiation	.404
Case Plan	Initiation	.397
Interview with Law Enforcement	Safety Assessment	.380
Interview with Law Enforcement	Engagement	.374
Observation of Supervised visit	Engagement	.413

Home Visit	Engagement	.383
Interview with Law Enforcement	Child Development	.364
Case Plan	Child Development	.334
Interview with a child	Risk	.407
Interview with Alleged Perpetrator	Risk	.353
Reunification Assessment	Placement	-.350
Observation of Supervised Visit	Case Plan	.393

n=38, p < .05

We calculated correlations between university and overall scores and each domain. There were only small, insignificant relationships between university and domain. This is an improvement over the 2018 CWUPP evaluation where there were significant relationships between university and different domains.

Results of Syllabi Review

The number of weeks dedicated to particular course content varied by university. Five universities utilized a course timeline that aligned exactly with the recommended course timeline. During 2017-2018, only 1 university aligned exactly with recommended timeframes. Results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5. Content Timeline by University.

Module	Recommended	Range of number of weeks allocated 2018-2019	Range of number of weeks allocated 2017-2018
Core 1	4 weeks	4 – 6	4-8
Core 2	2 weeks	2	2-3
Core 4	5 Weeks	4-8	3-8

Core 5	4 weeks	2-7	1-4
Core 6	5 Weeks	0-5	0-5
Core 7	3 Weeks	3	3-7
Core 8	5 Weeks	4-6	3-8

The percentage of readings and assignments that aligned with the recommended syllabi varied as well. Results are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6. Reading and Assignment Comparison for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019

	CSU	OU	OSU	UA	UC	UT	WSU	YSU
2018-2019 Readings	25%	100%	95%	90%	50%	66%	100%	100%
2017-2018 Readings	32%	93%	24%	53%	43%	41%	59%	55%
2018-2019 Assignments	40%	90%	70%	40%	100%	40%	80%	100%
2017-2018 Assignments	57%	86%	14.3%	28.5%	86%	42.9%	42.9%	57%

Table 7. Possible Assignments

Assignment	Number of Universities Requiring each Assignment
Diversity Reflection Paper	7
Safety Assessment	7
Safety Plan	7
Quiz on Fact Gathering	5

Family Assessment	7
Quiz on Engagement	3
Quiz on Child Development	4
Quiz on Separation, Loss & Reunification	4
Case Plan	7
Effective Use of Home Visits Assignments	5

Two universities required students to complete all ten recommended assignments. Three universities required students to complete at least 70% of them and three universities required 50% or fewer of these assignments. Additional assignments were utilized to illustrate course concepts.

These included:

- Present a PowerPoint presentation on Developmental Disabilities
- Midterm exam
- Debate Paper
- Final Exam
- Resource Guide
- Research Paper
- Self-Assessment
- Life Book
- Group Presentation on Fact Gathering

While many of these assignments are relevant to child welfare practice, the assigned topics of the assignments do not reinforce the application of key child welfare knowledge and skills required to practice child welfare in Ohio.

We computed three variables to examine the degree to which course alignment affected overall assessment scores and assessment scores in each domain. There were no significant relationships between assessment scores and the alignment of course assignments. There were small but significant relationships between the number of

weeks content was covered in the course and assessment scores. Specifically, universities whose course timeframes aligned with the recommended timeframes were slightly more likely to have higher overall assessment scores ($r = .413$, $p = .005$) and higher scores on the risk assessment domain ($r = .379$, $p = .012$). This suggests that 17% of the variation in overall assessment scores can likely be explained by the degree to which universities aligned with recommended course timeframes. Notably, when universities aligned with recommended course timeframes, students scored slightly lower on the child development domain ($r = -.385$, $p = .017$). There were some small but significant relationships between the alignment of course readings and scores on the student assessment. When university readings aligned with 90% or more of the recommended readings, students were slightly more likely to score higher on the child development domain ($r = .399$, $p = .013$) and the case initiation domain ($r = .304$, $p = .048$). This suggests that required course readings account for approximately 16% of variation in the child development assessment score and approximately 9% of the variation in the case initiation score.

STUDENT FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Theme 1. Course.

In general, respondents had positive comments about the Child Welfare courses.

- “These classes are the best. I learned more in these classes than in all my other classes, combined.”
- “They are interesting and directly related to what we do in the field.”

Theme 2. Instructors.

Two new instructors were trained to teach CW 2 this year. All of the current CWUPP classroom instructors have had experience in child welfare, four are currently working in the field, a trend the students find especially helpful. Respondents value the CWUPP instructors’ previous child welfare experience and passion for the work.

- “We love our class instructor she makes it fun and relevant. She is well prepared and fair.”
- “He understands the child welfare system so well it comes easy for him to teach it.”
- “She is the best professor I have had in all my five years here.”

Theme 3. Course Readings.

This was the first year 100% of the universities choose to use assigned readings instead of a text. Students were supportive of using individual readings instead of texts.

- “It was better to have specific reading assignments that applies to class instruction, than having a textbook.”
- “ I don’t think a standardized text would have given us the diversity we need to do child welfare well.”

Theme 4. Assignments.

Child Welfare 1 and 2 instructors were provided a list of assignments for some of the modules. Overall the students felt these were worthwhile and of value.

- “The assignments helped me look at myself and that was good.”

- “The assignments made you think about your own values.”

Theme 5. Classroom Topics.

Focus group participants identified 24 different classroom topics that directly related to the work they were doing in the field. The most frequently mentioned was:

- “Everything”

Also frequently noted:

- Assessment skills (e.g. safety, family) including use of CAPMIS tools and case planning
- Family engagement strategies
- Identifying child abuse and neglect
- SACWIS
- Child development and the impact of abuse and neglect

Other topics identified included paperwork, dealing with difficult people/parents, Acronyms, CAPTA, TR/AR, ethics, timelines, diversity and “The confidence to go into the field”. One student said, “The assessing safety equation magnet pulled it all together for me.”

Theme 6. Integrate Coursework and Field.

Overall the students had very few suggestions on how the instructors might improve the class.

- “Do more role play.”
- “Fix the issues with the on-line classes.”

And even fewer suggestions on how to improve integration:

- “I don’t know of anything, class coincided with what we do in the field.”
- “Could we do more SACWIS involvement in class? Show us how SACWIS looks and works.”

Analysis.

Compared to the 2018 academic year, there has been substantial improvement in fidelity of the Child Welfare 1 and Child Welfare 2 courses. No significant differences between universities were identified for the overall score nor for the scores in various domains. The results of the syllabi reviews indicated notable improvement in consistency across universities as it pertains to course timelines, course assignments, and course readings. In some cases, course syllabi did not provide detailed information about the specific required course readings, so it is possible that there is greater consistency across course readings than was identified in the syllabi review.

Improvements in consistency of course syllabi are notable, however it should also be noted that the consistency of Child Welfare Course syllabi does not provide an indication of the expertise of the child welfare course instructors in many of Ohio's child welfare best practices.

It is also important to note that the mean for student assessments was 68%, at most universities. The average scores by university ranged from 24% to an 88%. In general, this suggests that there is room to improve quality of course content and course consistency across all eight universities. The high score in each domain was 100%. This suggests that it is possible to achieve a 100% on the CWUPP assessment. It is likely that there were not significant differences among universities due to the small sample size at several universities, it is important to increase survey response rates to allow for examination of difference between universities. In addition, the score variation could be due to placement activities and agencies and student characteristics. In 2018, to address low safety assessment domain scores, additional training was provided to CWUPP instructors. The safety assessment scores increased in 2019.

Although specific differences between universities were not significant, there were some small but significant relationships between course time frames and overall assessment score, risk assessment domain, and child development domain. There were also small but significant relationships between use of recommended readings and child development score and case initiation score. These differences suggest that a small percentage of variation among assessment scores may be explained by course fidelity. Although the percentage is small, it does contribute to the student's performance on the assessment.

The student assessment process and syllabi review are not without limitation. Specifically, the assessment was administered as a survey and students were not given opportunity to study prior to completion, therefore, student scores may be lower than if they had an opportunity to study. Further, in many cases, we cannot determine if the scores were definitively a result of the Child Welfare Course content or if they were influenced by extraneous variables (field agency practice, existing knowledge, etc.). In addition, in some cases, university syllabi did not include a listing of required readings and therefore, it is possible that some universities did require more of the required readings, but the information was not provided in the syllabus.

According to focus group findings, student experiences in the courses were generally positive. They value the instructors' experiences and passion for child welfare. They were pleased with the assortment of reading materials. Focus group findings confirm an increase in the focus on assessment and the use of CAPMIS tools at many of the CWUPP universities.

Research Question 2.

To what degree do technology-based learning labs facilitate job preparedness?

Method. *Student questionnaire*

We also utilized the 53-item questionnaire described earlier in this report to assess student perception of preparedness for child welfare practice. Three items assessed student perception of learning labs. All items used a five-point Likert agreement scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree).

Student focus group findings

The state CWUPP coordinator conducted focus groups with current CWUPP students. In these focus groups students were asked about their experiences in the learning labs.

Results.

Eighty-seven percent of respondents agreed that their participation in the technology-based learning labs helped them feel more prepared to be a caseworker. Eighty-two percent agreed that the learning labs were a valuable use of their time and 90% agreed

that the practices taught in the learning labs aligned with what was taught in their field placement agency. Complete results are provided in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Student perception of learning lab experience.

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Did not complete
Participation helped feel prepared	50%	36.8%	2.6%	5.3%	2.6%	2.6%
Valuable use of time	52.6%	28.9%	5.3%	2.6%	7.9%	2.6%
Practices in lab aligned with agency	55.3%	34.2%	5.3%	0%	2.6%	2.6%

STUDENT FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

100% of the universities offered three days of SACWIS Learning Labs. Overall the feedback was very positive.

- “I loved the learning labs”
- “Case planning was great. I took the labs and the next day I actually go to do one, the labs built the foundation for me.”
- “I appreciated them and found them very useful”
- “Trainers are awesome.”

Most universities scheduled, set up and monitored the labs in their universities. Two universities had their students attend existing learning labs at the RCs due to the small number of students.

The OCWTP Coordinators/Directors worked with IHS to develop a protocol for setting up the learning labs so they could be done independently of the RTCs.

The only suggestions for improving the labs were related to the timing.

- “I would have liked them earlier in the year, especially case planning.”

SUPERVISOR FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Field supervisors found the learning labs valuable.

- “The labs helped the students apply the CAPMIS tools they had learned in class and seen in the field. It allowed them to become more familiar with SACWIS.”

Analysis.

Students and supervisors generally agreed that student participation in technology-based learning labs was a valuable experience. This perception was affirmed by student survey responses, student focus groups and supervisor focus group responses.

Research Question 3:

How many Ohio PCSAs accept interns and/or hire CWUPP graduates?

Methods.

We analyzed data from the statewide CWUPP database to identify how many PCSAs accepted interns and hired CWUPP graduates. We analyzed relevant student focus group data as well.

Results.

CWUPP continues to expand their reach with CWUPP interns and graduates. A complete list of counties who have accepted interns since the program's inception is presented and a complete list of counties who have hired CWUPP graduates since the program's inception is presented in Table 9. In 2018-2019, CWUPP students were placed in 26 counties, two of whom had not previously accepted CWUPP interns. Thirty-nine CWUPP graduates were hired in 2018-2019 by 18 different counties. Since program inception, 77 counties have been involved with CWUPP, either via hiring or placement. Sixty-eight (77%) counties have had CWUPP interns and 58 (66%) of counties have hired CWUPP graduates.

Table 9. CWUPP Placement and Hiring Agency

Placement Agency	Number of Placements	Number of Graduates Hired
Allen	1	0
Ashland	1	4
Ashtabula	2	2
*Auglaize	1	0
Athens	49	13
Belmont	6	0
Brown	6	2
Butler	24	20
Carroll	1	1
Champaign	2	2
Clark	22	7
Clermont	4	2
Clinton	0	1
Columbiana	0	1
*Coshocton	1	2
Crawford	1	0
Cuyahoga	74	27
Defiance	0	1
Delaware	7	3
Erie	2	0
Fairfield	19	19
Fayette	2	0
Franklin	153	137

Fulton	2	1
Gallia	2	0
Geauga	5	7
Greene	29	23
Guernsey	3	5
Hamilton	64	54
Hancock	1	2
Hardin	0	3
Henry	1	0
Highland	0	2
Hocking	7	0
Huron	1	0
Jackson	1	0
Jefferson	0	1
Knox	2	0
Lake	3	4
Lawrence	2	0
Licking	2	1
Logan	2	0
Lorain	1	4
Lucas	71	52
Madison	4	2
Mahoning	21	11
Marion	3	3
Medina	4	5
Mercer	1	1
Miami	8	6
Monroe	1	1

Montgomery	63	47
Muskingum	17	3
Ottawa	6	0
Paulding	0	1
Perry	2	1
Pickaway	0	2
Pike	1	0
Portage	3	4
Preble	4	1
Richland	6	4
Ross	5	1
Sandusky	2	0
Scioto	2	0
Seneca	1	1
Shelby	3	2
Stark	15	14
Summit	49	39
Trumbull	22	20
Tuscarawas	1	2
Union	6	4
Van Wert	0	1
Vinton	4	1
Warren	13	12
Washington	10	0
Wayne	9	8
Wood	6	1
77 Total Counties	869	601

*New placement counties in 2018-2019

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

One hundred percent of the students felt CWUPP should be considered a statewide program and 60% indicated they would be willing to re-locate to find employment.

- “I would move for employment.”

Forty percent of the students indicated they were not interested in re-locating to find employment.

- “I have to stay here because I am working two jobs.”

Analysis.

The reach of CWUPP continues to grow. The intent of CWUPP has always been for all 88 counties to have access to a CWUPP intern and/or graduate. Over the last three years we have seen a slight, but steady increase in the number of smaller counties (7) who accepted student interns or hired graduates. This is likely the result of considerable efforts to inform counties about the benefits of participation in the UPP program and to encourage them to host a UPP intern or hire a UPP graduate.

The number of CWUPP students placed and graduates hired was extracted from the statewide database. However, since several database updates generated by the software company produced data entry challenges, the lists may not be entirely accurate.

Research Question 4.

Are CWUPP program objectives being met?

Methods.

To best address this research question, we utilized process and outcome evaluation methods. We conducted supervisor focus groups with field supervisors, student focus groups, and analysis of data from the statewide CWUPP database. We included questions in the supervisor focus groups about intern knowledge and skill in CAPMIS, SACWIS, confidentiality, personal safety, and specific agency policies. We conducted

focus groups with CWUPP students to assess CWUPP processes related to recruitment of students, field experiences, and overall experience of the CWUPP.

Graduates entering the public child welfare field

Fifty-nine students graduated from the CWUPP during the 2018-2019 academic year. There was a total of 78 students in the 2018-2019 academic cohort, fifteen of whom were juniors and are scheduled to graduate during the 2019-2020 academic year. 13.5% of CWUPP graduates received their MSW. Complete participation by university is displayed in Table 10.

Table 10. CWUPP students and graduates by university.

University	Juniors	Seniors	MSW	Total Graduates
CSU	0	5	0	5
OU	0	11	0	11
OSU	0	9	4	13
UA	0	5	1	6
UC	0	8	3	11
UT	8	2	0	2
WSU	1	8	0	8
YSU	6	4	0	3
Totals	15	55	8	59

Although 78 students were enrolled in CWUPP in 2018-2019, only 59 were eligible for graduation. Of those 59 who graduated, 63% obtained employment in one of Ohio’s 88 PCSAs. Focus group respondents overwhelmingly identified they will seek employment in an Ohio PCSA (98%, n=58). Of the remaining respondents, 20% (n=12) plan to attend graduate school immediately following graduation, 8% (n=5) indicated they will not pursue a career in children services, and one student plans to seek employment at a PCSA following a Peace Corp commitment. Thus, there are 6, or 10%, CWUPP graduates currently seeking employment. The number of graduating students

who had accepted positions at the time this evaluation report was written is displayed in Table 11. It should be noted that CWUPP graduates are permitted 180 days following graduation to find employment in public child welfare agencies, this report was prepared in June of 2019, which is prior to the allotted 180 - day timeframe for 2019 graduates.

Table 11. 2019 employment rates.

University	Number Employed	Percent Employed	Number seeking employment	Students pursuing additional education	Graduates who chose not to pursue child welfare
CSU	1	12.5%	3	4	0
OU	6	54%	0	4	1
OSU	10	76.9%	0	0	3
UA	4	66.7%	0	1	1
UC	7	63.6%	0	4	0
UT	1	50%	1	0	0
WSU	5	62.5%	2	1	0
YSU	3	100%	0	0	0
Totals	37	57.7%	6 (10.2%)	12 (20.3%)	5 (8.4%)

Analysis.

Although most students gained or are seeking employment at an Ohio PCSA, it should be noted that even when CWUPP graduates choose not to pursue a career in child welfare, it is not a failure. Recognizing that child welfare is not a good career choice and departing the field prior to employment saves PCSAs associated hiring and onboarding costs. In these cases, CWUPP allows the student, agency and university to re-direct those individuals who are likely not to succeed as child welfare workers. Even

though a student might not choose to go into child welfare, their participation in CWUPP has provided them with an unprecedented exposure to the field which will benefit them (and child welfare) no matter what field of social work they pursue. Approximately 20% of CWUPP graduates go on to pursue an MSW. At this time there is no mechanism to determine if those graduates go on to pursue careers in child welfare upon completion of their MSW.

In 2018-2019, the program experienced a slight decrease in the number of CWUPP students (4%). CWUPP needs to be aggressive in their recruitment efforts to increase the number of graduates available to meet the current challenges of staffing PCSAs.

Preparing graduates for jobs in child welfare

SUPERVISOR FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

We asked field supervisor focus group respondents about the knowledge and skill of their CWUPP students in performing some key CAPMIS tasks. Specifically, they were asked if their CWUPP intern understood the importance of the task and had the skill to complete one. They were prompted to respond with a yes or no. Their responses are summarized in Table 12 below. Given the nature of the question, it is difficult to ascertain if the students understood the importance and had the skill, or if it was one or the other.

Table 12. Key CAPMIS understanding and skill.

Key CAPMIS task	# Responding yes	% yes
Safety Assessment	27	79.4%
Safety Planning	27	79.4%
Assessing Family Strengths and Needs	26	76.5%
Service Planning	25	73.5%

We also asked supervisors to identify if their students could use SACWIS to complete essential CAPMIS tasks. Supervisors provided a yes or no response to this question. This is displayed in Table 13.

Table 13. Documentation of CAPMIS task in SACWIS.

Document CAPMIS task in SACWIS	# Responding yes	% yes
Safety Assessment	27	79.4%
Safety Plan	21	61.8%
Family Assessment	26	76.5%
Service Plan	21	61.8%

We asked supervisors if their CWUPP student had the opportunity to learn about confidentiality, caseworker personal safety, and key agency casework policies. 100% of the focus group respondents indicated their CWUPP interns had learned these important concepts from themselves or other PCSA personnel.

Supervisors also provided comments about the preparedness of CWUPP students for child welfare work.

- “UPP gave my intern hands on experience, he shadowed across the agency and got exposure to all parts of case work. A supervisor in the agency taught his class so all the needed connections were made. Of course, he still has some areas to work on but he has been hired into my unit.”
- “UPP interns are better prepared than many of our new hire out of Core.”

Most of the field supervisors felt the students had minimal knowledge gaps.

- “The only thing I would teach after hire is how to deal with aggressive clients.”
- “I have to remind myself they are brand new and there are some things they would not get in class, such as how to do documentation.”
- “The only gaps are the ones that are not in Core, like mental health, domestic violence and drug and alcohol.”

Supervisors listed many student attributes that contributed to their gaining knowledge and skill.

- “Personality and desire.”
- “Ability to do critical thinking.”
- “I think child welfare is easier for outgoing students.”
- “Maturity.”
- “The hungrier the student the better they are, the more driven they are, the more they will succeed.”

STUDENT FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

We asked CWUPP students if they felt their CWUPP participation had prepared them for child welfare work. One hundred percent of the CWUPP students felt CWUPP had helped prepare them for the work.

- “The hands-on experience for 9 months does it, you see everything a caseworker does.”
- “I know a student who is placed in Child Welfare but did not make the UPP cut and she feels lost.”
- “UPP has helped us gain some knowledge and get exposure to the lingo and to the coordination. I have learned what to say to the child, the family and community in order to do this work.”
- “My supervisor is happy with how UPP has prepared me. She told me UPP better prepared us than her new workers out of orientation.”

Analysis.

Supervisor focus group findings suggest that, in general, CWUPP students understand the importance of key child welfare assessment and planning tasks, and in most cases, can also document those tasks in SACWIS. Supervisor comments suggest that they perceive CWUPP students as prepared to do child welfare work. Student focus group findings confirm that students feel prepared to do the work.

Process Evaluation Results

Overall Program Satisfaction

STUDENT FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Student focus group findings provide much insight into the quality of the experience of CWUPP students and graduates. Overall respondents' comments about CWUPP were overwhelmingly positive:

- "Loved it."
 - "You definitely get out of it what you put into it."
 - "UPP was great. I would recommend it to everyone."
-

SUPERVISOR FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Supervisor comments about CWUPP were overwhelmingly positive.

- "UPP students already come in so far ahead of other new hires."
- "We take only CWUPP interns for hire because they come in so prepared. It has really worked for us and we are grateful for it. It is totally different experience than other interns."
- "I am a CWUPP graduate and I have seen it from both sides. CWUPP definitely gave me an edge up when I came in."
- "UPP is a great program and very needed."
- "UPP gives our students such great ground work and that makes them further ahead in the agency."

Analysis.

Students and supervisors were very forthcoming with their feedback about what they liked about CWUPP and areas they would like to see improved. Overall, both students and supervisors had favorable experiences with CWUPP.

Program Selection

STUDENT FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Respondents report learning about the CWUPP program via CWUPP campus coordinator recruitment activities such as presentations to various social work classes, campus emails, blogs, websites, pamphlets and posters. At times, other universities had presentations about the CWUPP. Student-identified recruitment strategies are listed in Table 14.

Table 14. Student-identified CWUPP recruitment strategies.

Professor	CC/Director/Presentation	CWUPP Students	Other
N=4	N=47	N=4	N=8
6%	75%	6%	13%

*Numbers rounded to the nearest 1%

Consistent with prior years the great majority of CWUPP students find out about the program through the University Campus Coordinator's recruitment activities, usually through presentations during social work classes.

- "The campus coordinator attended our general practice class and talked about CWUPP."

UPP students have frequently participated in recruitment activities for new CWUPP students, but this year saw an increase in the number of county staff also assisting.

- "My campus coordinator and a field supervisor attended one of my classes and talked about CWUPP"

There was an increase in other forms of recruitment activities such as campus emails, blogs, websites, blasts, pamphlets, and posters.

- "I researched on line and found information about CWUPP."
- "I did job shadowing my sophomore year and the agency told me about CWUPP."
- "I heard about CWUPP when I was doing a campus tour."

- “I saw a poster in the social work department.”

Analysis.

The campus coordinators from each of the universities continued to compile a list of potential recruitment strategies based on their own personal experiences and students’ feedback. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of students coming from branch campus. This school year students came from nine different branch campuses, in addition to the main campuses, to enroll in CWUPP. Several students suggested increased recruitment at the branch campuses. Although most students identified that they learned about CWUPP through a presentation from the campus coordinator or program director, many thought the most effective recruitment strategy is to utilize existing CWUPP students, CWUPP graduates, and PCSA staff in recruitment efforts.

Students identified a variety of reasons for participating in CWUPP. These reasons are displayed in Table 15.

Table 15. Reason for participating in CWUPP.

Incentive Money	Opportunity for Employment in Public Sector	Existing Interest in Child Welfare	Recruited to Child Welfare
N=18	N=16	N=20	N=11
27.6%	24.6%	30.8%	16.9%

There was a marked decrease in the number of students enrolling in CWUPP for the incentive monies and an increase in the numbers who had an existing interest in Child Welfare over previous years.

- “I knew I wanted to go into Child Welfare, getting Core done and getting the incentive made it all good.”

Several students also cited the opportunity for employment as a reason to pursue CWUPP.

- “A job in a field I wanted, and the money did it for me.”

In addition to reasons previously listed, students also stated the University Partnership Program offers various opportunities not found in other placements.

- “I was told child welfare is like the New York City of social work, if you can make it there you can make it anywhere. CWUPP makes it easier to make it.”
- “The opportunity CWUPP gave me, a lot more hands on then other internships.”
- “I knew CWUPP would give me the knowledge in something I wanted to do, and it is hands on.”
- “I wanted CWUPP because the internship was more personal, skill building, hands on and not only observation.”

Analysis.

As universities, agencies, and CWUPP graduates recruit for CWUPP they need to be mindful of the various reason students are attracted to the program and include those in their recruitment activities. As part of the 2018 – 2019 Strategic Plan, CWUPP will be working on developing some statewide recruitment tools with the goal of also increasing the number of students participating in CWUPP.

The CWUPP Field Experience

Placement Areas.

In the survey of CWUPP students, 81.6% noted they received experience in intake/assessment units and 76.3% noted they received experience in ongoing units. Complete results are displayed in Table 16.

Table 16. CWUPP student placement areas.

Area	Number	Percent
Intake/Assessment	31	81.6%
Ongoing/Protective Services	29	76.3%
Screening	11	28.9%

Foster Care/Adoption/Kinship	11	28.9
Other*	3	7.9%
Four or more practice areas	7	14.6%
Three practice areas	6	12.5%
Two practice areas	16	33.3%
One practice area	17	35.4%

*Other practice areas included kinship care and permanency units.

STUDENT FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

The great majority of students spent one semester in one unit and one in the other.

- “I was in ongoing the first semester and intake the second.”

The second largest group was exposed to the one worker model of service delivery, or a variation of that model.

- “I loved having the opportunity to see everything.”

There is a trend among larger PCSAs to keep interns in either intake or ongoing for both semesters. A small percentage of interns are also getting exposure to foster/adoption and permanency units.

- “I was in ongoing my first semester and the second semester I moved to the foster/adoption unit.” This intern was later hired to this unit.

Placement Activities.

CWUPP students participated in or observed a variety of essential casework activities. Many also received additional training in SACWIS.

Table 17. Placement experiences.

Activity	Number of Students	Percentage
Receipt of a child abuse or neglect referral	32	84.2%
Initiation of a child abuse report (Alternative or traditional response)	30	78.9%
Assessment of Safety	36	94.7%
Interview with law enforcement	15	39.5%
Family Assessment	33	86.8%
Development of a case Plan/Family Service Plan	29	76.3%
Semi-Annual Administrative Review (SAR)	27	71.1%
Case Review/Family Service Plan Review	29	76.3%
Reunification Assessment	13	34.2%
Child Victim Interview	20	52.6%
Perpetrator Interview	21	55.3%
Observed supervised visit	33	86.8%
Home visit with children not in custody	33	86.8%
Implement a safety plan	26	68.4%
Visit with children in kinship or foster care	34	89.5%
Placement of children in care	29	76.3%

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

Students in this year's focus groups identified over 26 distinct child welfare activities they found to be "Most Valuable". The magnitude of these experiences speaks to the exposure the students are receiving.

- “A baby stopped breathing and I had to do CPR.”
- “I possibly walked in on a sex trafficking of a five-year-old. It is still under investigation.”
- “I worked with a LGBT youth in foster care and we dealt with the biases he/she was dealing with, within the foster home, the agency and even me.”
- “Having a parent in my face with a camera saying she was going to put it on the internet.”
- “I got to act as an interpreter on one case and was assigned as the secondary worker.”

The most commonly cited experience was shadowing.

- “Shadowing different workers. Seeing different styles, how they documented, how they interacted, all were good, just different.”
- “Going out with intake, seeing the emergency hands on, real life experiences.”

As in previous years, removals were a commonly cited dramatic experience.

- “The second day at my placement I went out on a removal of a child (JR-6). The parents got into a wrestling match and the cop had to break down the door.”

Perhaps the most memorable lesson of all:

- “You don’t have to be serious all the time.”

We explored the CWUPP intern training and use of SACWIS as part of their field activities. The great majority of students receive their SACWIS passwords in a timely manner. Those who did not felt as if it had reduced their learning opportunity.

- “I think not having early and a lot of exposure to SACWIS is a big gap. We need to understand it and have exposure.”
- “I felt limited until I learned how to use SACWIS.”
- “We had one day of training a week for the first semester, some of which covered SACWIS”
- “We had 1 or 2 hours of training on how to use SACWIS, but I needed more hands on. Like we got in the labs, that was helpful.”

Most of the interns’ training on SACWIS was informal.

- “A case worker walked me through the processes we were learning in class (safety assessment, family assessment, case plan, etc.).”

All but one county allowed interns to access SACWIS.

- “I took notes and my caseworker entered the data.”

SUPERVISOR FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

CWUPP interns are required to do 210 hours of placement a semester in a child welfare agency for undergraduates and 420 total hours for graduate students. Field supervisors identified eight (8) field experiences they felt were the most valuable for students to participate in. The following is the list in order:

1. Initiating an intake
2. Seeing it completed
3. Hands on opportunities
4. Engagement
5. Paper work and filing
6. Removals
7. SACWIS
8. Supervising a visitation

All supervisors but two felt these experiences could be included on the student’s learning plan.

- “No, our learning plan is not that specific.”

When asked which area their interns knew well, they said:

- “Engagement” (This was the most frequently cited)
- “Documentation,
- “Communication.”
- “Assessment skills.”

- “Respect for clients.”

When asked what stood out to them the most about their intern’s field placement experience their comments included:

- “They understand the social work process and values; we just needed to help them apply it to casework.”
- “Interaction with our staff, she spends a lot of time shadowing and working with the caseworkers.”
- “I exposed my intern to the administrative part so they could see the decision behind the decision.”
- “We assign interns as assistants. They are assigned to a caseworker for shadowing and they do everything the caseworker does.”

We asked supervisor focus group respondents about the interns’ exposure to SACWIS during placement. 82.4% of respondents indicated that their interns spent time in SACWIS and 61.8% indicated that their agency provided formal SACWIS training to their CWUPP intern.

Analysis.

Many, if not all, of the supervisors’ recommendations for CWUPP intern activities are included in the *Key Field Experience Activities for UPP Interns: A Guideline*. Examples include participating in an initial investigation, and monitoring parent-child visits. This reinforces the value of this tool, especially for new field supervisors (initial assessment home visit, monitor a parent-child visit, etc.). Many of the activities listed in the *Key Field Experience Activities for UPP Interns: A Guideline* and in the CWUPP Learning Plan were cited as some of the tasks that students do well. (e.g.: engagement, assessment, SACWIS). Student focus group findings confirm that the identified activities were important in their placement experience.

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

Theme 1. Field Placement Selection.

Seven out of the eight universities had students identify their top three to five choices for placements. The majority of those students received their first choice. Students report choosing their placement site for various reasons:

- “Location was important to me. My placement is 15 minutes from home.”
- “Flexibility, I work and had only limited days I could go into the field.”
- “ I wanted a large agency. I got to see tons of stuff.”
- “I had heard positive things about an internship there and heard it would be better than most.”

Theme 2. Organization and Structure of Placement.

A majority of the CWUPP students (75%) reported their field placement sites were well organized.

- “My supervisors gave me a big binder with information I would need for any situation. It was my bible. I go there first before going to her when I have questions.”
- “Ours was really well organized. We had weekly supervision and we went over our learning plans in supervision.”

Students who identified a lack of organization in their placement cited some common themes:

1. Supervisors new to CWUPP and field supervision
 - “My placement was not very well organized, especially in the beginning. We were both new; she didn’t know anything about UPP or what I should be doing.”
2. Units not prepared for interns

- “Ours was not well organized. Our supervisor seemed like she didn’t want us and neither did the caseworkers.”

3. Lack of Structure

- “There was no apparent plan for the interns to follow, a total lack of structure.”

Students frequently cited that having a CWUPP graduate as their supervisors positively impacted their field placement.

- “My placement and supervisor were very organized. She had a plan for me, and we followed it. She was a UPP graduate, so I think she knew what I needed.”

Theme 3. Supervision.

Ninety percent of the students report routine supervision of one hour or more a week with their field supervisors.

- “My supervisor covers what we saw, what our plans said we should do, competencies and ethical issues we might have encountered.”
- “Our agency does group supervision. I loved it; we get so much out of it.”

Other students reported less structured supervision.

- “I had no formal supervision time, but her door was always opened.”
- “Our supervisor supervises a lot of people and she didn’t always have time for us. But we knew we could always go to a worker.”
- “I have not seen my supervisor either semester. A real lack of organization.”

Theme 4. Linking Field to Coursework.

Many students cited specific ways the supervisors linked their field work to their course work.

- “We talked about assignments often in supervision.”
- “My supervisor asked what I was doing in class and would help me apply it to the field.”

Three of the CWUPP class instructors are also field supervisors, students report this is optimal for integrating class and field.

- “My class instructor was my field supervisor, so it came naturally, the way the class was set up and the way my placement went, it just happened.”

Theme 5. Influence on Placement.

Students cited caseworkers slightly more frequently than supervisors as having the greatest influence on them.

- “An LSW in my unit took me under her wing.”
- “My caseworker had been in the field for over 20 years. She was very knowledgeable and willing to help.”

Students had the following to say of their field supervisors.

- “She always had a plan and always checked on me to make sure I was busy.”
- “An intake supervisor was very active in helping me get the most out of my internship.”

Students also frequently mentioned CWUPP graduates.

- “My field supervisor is great. She was a UPP intern, so she understands it. She let me be a professional learner. She made sure I was looked after and put me with the right people and steered me away from the ones I shouldn’t work with.”

One student said:

- “Everyone; clients trying to work a case plan, the worker I shadowed who memorized everything that happened in the home, the supervisor’s demeanor and how she treated people. Everyone cared.”

Theme 6. Impressions and Reactions.

Students used 37 different adjectives to describe their internship; *interesting* was the most common, others included.

- “Amazing
- “Eye opening”
- “Impactful”
- “Awesome”

One student said:

- “A nine-month long job interview.”

Theme 7. Suggestions to Improve Field Placement.

When asked what would have made their placement more meaningful the current themes, in order of greatest number to smallest, are:

1. Desire to be a CWUPP host unit and field supervisor
 - “Make sure the supervisors want to take an intern.”
 - “Make sure the caseworkers want to have an intern shadow them.”
2. More hands on
 - “I wish they had given us more hands-on experience.”
 - “I would have liked “cases” of my own (secondary worker). But I understand things get chaotic and keeping kids safe comes first.”
3. Provide a primary caseworker for the student to shadow
 - “Please assign me to a caseworker I can shadow.”
4. Better organization
 - “Create an agenda, organize it, assign daily tasks, don’t let us just sit.”
5. Most students were very complementary of their placements. Even when asked what they could do to improve them.
 - “I had a really good placement. I learned a lot more than I could have in class alone.”

Analysis.

Students generally had positive reactions to their field placement experience. The success of the placement rests on a combination of supervision, organization, and caseworker support. It is apparent that a huge part of the success of an internship depends on linking the right student to the right supervisor and to the right caseworker. The field of child welfare in Ohio is fortunate to have such a large number of supervisors and caseworkers willing to act as mentors for CWUPP interns. It is also

essential that agencies understand not all supervisors can successfully act in this capacity and to recognize those, who successfully supervise interns, for their efforts in shaping the future caseworkers and the future field of child welfare in Ohio.

The placement experience had a significant impact on helping students determine if child welfare is a good fit for them, and in preparing them for the demanding work of protecting children. Field placements can help agencies determine whether the student would be a good fit in their agency.

We are seeing somewhat of a shift from prior years regarding students' suggestions for making placements more meaningful. While better organization still remained on the list it has now moved to number three with desire to be a CWUPP host unit and field supervisor being the number one requested improvement. Fewer comments about the need for increased organization may indicate that field supervisors are using CWUPP tools such as the "*Recommended Practices in Field Instruction*" manual to organize field placements.

The type and magnitude of 'hands-on' experience depends on the county. Some counties support interns only shadowing and observing the work while other counties support assigning interns as secondary caseworkers on cases. Discussions with field supervisors, during focus groups, indicate more counties might be willing to consider the more 'hands on' approach.

When students feel as if the agency "does not want them" they should be encouraged to address these concerns with their Campus Coordinators so he/she can intervene with the field supervisor to address this issue. Students being placed in units that do not want them is a lose/lose for everyone.

Learning Contract

All university schools of social work require social work interns to complete a standardized learning plan, regardless of their field placement arrangement. In early 2017 a group of campus coordinators updated the learning plan to reflect Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) current competencies, identify child welfare specific tasks and create resources to help counties optimize its use. In early 2018 campus coordinators received an updated version of the *Recommended Practices in Field Instruction: A Guide for Field Education Sites* which includes a notebook with an entire

section on completing the learning plan. It also includes a sample learning plan with child welfare specific tasks. Many of the universities are using this resource to help field instructors complete the learning plans.

Eighty percent of the universities have been able to incorporate the CWUPP learning plan model. Some universities will not allow CWUPP students to use a “different” learning plan than the other social work students. Campus Coordinators in many of these universities have learned how to help the counties incorporate both.

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

Feedback from students about universities using the CWUPP learning plan are very positive.

- “It was a good experience because in the real world you have a lot of tasks to do”

While the new format is well received students still feel like the learning plan could be improved.

- “Some of the competencies keep me out of the field, which is where we will learn the most.”

The majority of students’ report doing their learning plans in conjunction with their supervisor.

- “ I did it with my field supervisors during weekly supervision.”
- “I did it on my own and then reviewed it with my supervisor.”

Students also reported reviewing their learning plans during supervision

- “We used it during supervision to make sure we had covered everything.”

Students also reported using their learning plans to monitor their own progress.

- “I used the learning plan to guide my placement. I kept it in the drawer and checked it frequently.”
- “I used it to make an agenda for supervision.”

SUPERVISOR FOCUS GROUPS

CWUPP field supervisors were asked about the learning plans and their use of them. Their feedback was very consistent with that of the students. They also reported completing the learning plans in various ways:

- “I sit down with the students and we go over it verbally and then they do it and bring it back and we review the final together.”
- “We do it jointly. I meet with the student and find out what they want to learn, and I also find out what the units’ needs are, and we plug them in to those areas.”
- “I use it to help organize me and set up things with other units.”

Field supervisors reported using the learning plan in supervision and to structure the placement.

- “I use it during supervision, our whole agency does.”
- “We use it to guide what the students are doing.”

Supervisors were also grateful for the new CWUPP learning plan.

- “It is much easier to do since it has been changed, easier to read and do. Thank you for changing it.”

Analysis.

While more universities are now using the CWUPP learning plan format to a very positive outcome, some universities require the same learning plan for all social work students. The campus coordinators at these universities should work with the Field Supervisors to determine how helpful elements of the CWUPP learning plan could be incorporated into those plans. Because the revised learning plan is more “user friendly” and specific to CWUPP students, more field supervisors are using it to guide supervision and structure the placement. Both students and field supervisors report that the learning plan is beneficial to their work.

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

Theme 1. Support of Students.

The great majority of students hold their campus coordinator in very high esteem.

- “She is always available if I was stressed out or needed help. She was always checking in on me.”
- “His time in the field and knowing everyone really helps.”

Students reported their campus coordinator helped them in many ways.

- “Anything we need.”
- “She tries to find things to make us better social workers.”
- “Very available, easy to reach by phone and easy to talk to.”
- “She helped me personally.”
- “She checks in on us and worked with my supervisor when I had problems.”

Theme 2. Perspective on Seminar.

Four of the universities conduct formal meetings (with set time, dates, & agenda) in the form of a CWUPP seminar (OSU, WSU, UT, UC) conducted by the Campus Coordinator. Overall the students are very positive about these meetings/seminars.

- “Any question we have are answered. It is nice to hear what others are saying, especially if they are placed in a different unit.”
- “These meetings are really useful, we get to debrief, be more open and get support.”

Three of the other four universities (YSU, UA, YSU) who do not have CWUPP specific seminars conduct meetings with their CWUPP interns in various ways. Some do Zoom meetings or use Skype. Others conduct informal, periodic meetings. Campus Coordinators conduct these meetings and most students are grateful for these opportunities.

- “It is nice to connect with the other UPP students, so I don’t feel alone.”
- “Meetings were helpful to make sure we were up to date on what we need to do.”
- “I find our meetings useful, a reflective time with someone who knows our field and UPP.”

When students were asked for suggestions on how to improve seminar/meetings they had only a few suggestions

- “Our campus coordinator does a really good job, just a little more structure to the meetings would be great.”
- “Set date and time for the UPP students to meet with our campus coordinator.”

Theme 3. Suggestions for Campus Coordinators.

Overall the students had very few recommendations for what campus coordinators could do to make the experience better.

- “Educate the field supervisor more before the students actually get there.”
- “I would have liked more content the second semester of seminar.”
- “Make sure the agency has space for interns. We got kicked out of our desks and had no place to be.”
- “Fix the problems with the on-line classes.”
- “I had multiple miscommunications about graduate school and never got any clarity so decided not to pursue UPP at that level.”

SUPERVISOR FOCUS GROUPS

Field supervisors also held their campus coordinators in high esteem. All counties reported routine contact at least once each semester, but many reported more.

- “The standard is once every few weeks, he pops in my office to see how things are going.”

All counties, but one, reported the campus coordinators conduct orientation training for them.

- “The campus coordinator offers formal orientation training for field supervisors that is specific to UPP.”
- “Orientation was very helpful. We did a review of the learning plan and did a mock one. That was helpful.”

Other training and support are also offered.

- “The university offers webinars we can participate in all the time.”
- “Our campus coordinator provides a lot of support. We have quarterly meetings and new field supervisors have the opportunity to meet monthly to do peer to peer support.”

Generally, field supervisors are happy with the amount of ongoing training they are receiving.

Analysis.

CWUPP campus coordinators have an important role in the success of the CWUPP. Their coordination, support and educational tasks affect every aspect of the CWUPP students’ success. Ohio’s CWUPP campus coordinators are overwhelmingly competent, committed and professional as they perform their multi-faceted work and continue to strive for improvement.

Campus coordinators recognize the value of students sharing their CWUPP experience in formal meetings or seminars. The meetings establish a cohort dynamic where the students get to know and support each other; and, this also allows for future opportunities for collaboration. A recommendation would be for 100% of the universities to offer some type of meeting with their CWUPP interns.

Student suggestions/recommendations about how the campus coordinator can make the CWUPP experience better speaks volumes to the responsibility the campus coordinators have. They are responsible for implementation and oversight of all aspects of the program including recruiting and screening students and counties for CWUPP, training field supervisors, linking students and counties, supervising students and

counties, ensuring fidelity to Core in the classroom and helping the students find employment.

As universities expand their reach to branch campuses, campus coordinators are tasked with developing and implementing strategies to keep students at regional campuses engaged.

Field supervisors appreciate the support and training they receive from campus coordinators. They have positive relationships with campus coordinators, which is essential to the success of the CWUPP.

Additional CWUPP Experiences cited by Students

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

Theme 1. Student participation in PCSAO Conference.

Most students shared their excitement about being able to attend PCSAO conference.

- “I appreciated how respectful I was treated. Everyone accepted me and didn’t treat me like an intern.”
- “It was one of my favorite parts of UPP.”
- “It was wonderful to go to the workshops and do some networking.”

Theme 2. Child Welfare Class Delivery Method.

Students from one university reported some issues with their on-line Child Welfare classes.

- “Doing class online was a disadvantage for UPP. I liked the online option, but class didn’t give us examples.”
- “Online was a different professor and it was not good.”

Analysis.

Students appreciate the benefit of attending the PCSAO conference. It is one of the important 'perks' of being part of the CWUPP program.

When child welfare courses are delivered online, efforts should be made to assure the class provides the same experience as the face-to-face class.

Field supervisor experience

SUPERVISOR FOCUS GROUPS

Relevance of CWUPP Course Work

76% field supervisors reported receiving a copy of both Child Welfare class syllabi.

- "It helps to know what they are doing in class."
- "My UPP student and I talk about what they were covering in class."

Overall the supervisors felt what was taught in class was very applicable to the field.

- "Parallels nicely. They either just covered it or are covering it now."
- "What they hear in class is what they hear in the field. They feel more confident talking about what they learn in class while they are in the field."
- "The classroom is the introduction and the field is exposure, together they are invaluable."

Field supervisors report very little disconnect between course work and the field.

- "... long term employees fill in the knowledge gaps. One needs to be able to experience it to be able to make all the connections,"
- "Students recognize each county does things their own way, so the instructor processes this in class as well. We process this when students point it out."

Analysis.

Even though the majority of field supervisors received a copy of child welfare course syllabi, CWUPP should strive for 100%. The course syllabi help field supervisors know when a student is learning specific concepts in class. They can then help the student apply what they are learning in class to their field experience.

It is affirming that field supervisors think the classes relate to what the students are experiencing in the field. This increases the value of CWUPP and also increases the likelihood that we are achieving a goal of CWUPP: To prepare students for a career in Ohio's Child Welfare agencies.

Field supervisors reported the timing of when key concepts are taught was important for interns. Some counties felt the timing was perfect while others felt some concepts were taught too late in the year. For example, some counties expect interns to be involved in case plan development early in the semester, but case planning is taught later in the semester.

Overall the comments regarding timing were agency specific.

- "The class does not always match up with the timing of what we do in the field. We have students do case planning the first semester of placement. We start students in protective (ongoing) first and then put them in intake the second semester. The classes are taught from beginning of intake to the end of a case. We only hire for intake."

Recommendations for Improving CWUPP

All recommendations for improving CWUPP were university or agency specific, for example:

- "I would like to develop a form for the interns to give us feedback. Is there anything they felt like they didn't get from us or anything we could do differently with the next intern?"
- "A peer to peer meeting with field supervisors would be great. Getting together with others doing the same thing would help us all."
- "Have a perspective student shadow a worker prior to being admitted to UPP."

Analysis.

Use of an Exit Interview for CWUPP students has the potential to address the field supervisors' desire to obtain feedback from the students. This request has been shared with the campus coordinator. Since all supervisor recommendations were university or agency-specific they will be reviewed with the universities during the annual CWUPP site visit. Should any prove statewide they will be addressed at the next CWUPP Statewide meeting.

Use of CWUPP Resources for Field Supervisors

The CWUPP has developed various tools/resources to help field supervisors in their work with CWUPP interns and to increase consistency of interns' experiences across agencies. The following is a review of these tools and a brief description, all of which are available on the PCSAO website.

Resource #1: Recommended Practices in Field Instruction Manual and Notebook-an extensive resource developed to take a county through the entire CWUPP process, from the initial decision to be a CWUPP county, setting up the internship, choosing the field supervisor, completing the learning plan, supervising interns and monitoring their work and completing the exit interview with the intern. The Notebook also includes additional resources for supervisors such as shadowing forms and examples of supervision logs. 63% of the field supervisors reported having access to this tool.

Resource #2: Key Field Experiences Activities for UPP Interns- a list of suggested activities all CWUPP interns should do or have exposure to. It recommends these activities be included in the learning plan and can be used as a resource to structure the placement. This tool was developed by campus coordinators, field supervisors and students. All but two universities use this tool extensively. The field supervisor report finding it very helpful.

- "Loved it, used it for years."

Resource #3: Learning Plan Support-All universities with accredited social work programs require all interns to complete a Learning Plan. In short, this learning plan is a list of activities students can do while in field to demonstrate competence in identified areas. For many years feedback for both students and field supervisors regarding the learning plans were negative. In 2017 CWUPP did extensive work to redo the learning

plan to make it child welfare specific. Since that time feedback from both supervisors and student using the new plan has been very positive. Supervisors report 6 universities are using the new learning plan and have been receiving assistance in using it.

Resource #4: Tools for Shadowing- Since shadowing is such a huge part of a CWUPP internship tools to assist field supervisors in this process were found (thanks to Summit County) and shared with the campus coordinator to share with the field supervisors. 38% (3 of 8) of universities are reported to have shared these forms with their supervisors.

Resource #5: Exit Interviews- These forms were borrowed from Fairfield and Athens Counties to give to the intern the opportunity to provide the field supervisors feedback on the internship. 38% (3 of 8) of the universities reported they shared the exit interviews with their field supervisors.

Analysis.

The CWUPP has developed/adopted many tools and resources to assist the county agencies and field supervisors. Feedback regarding their value has been very positive. All CWUPP field placement agencies should be encouraged to utilize these tools. Based on feedback from the field supervisors and results of the 2018-2019 CWUPP Evaluation work will continue to develop resources for field supervision.

During this academic year an additional CWUPP tool was developed- ***Child Welfare Field Practicum Resource and Handbook for Students***. This tool was designed to help CWUPP students navigate CWUPP and the world of child welfare. It was developed by representatives from the CWUPP steering committee, students and field supervisors. As of this date all universities but one has received and reviewed this handbook. The goal is for all students to receive the handbook and use it throughout their internship.

The value of conducting facilitated discussion groups with CWUPP field supervisors is evident. Confirmation on what are doing right and suggestions for improvements are always welcome. CWUPP continues to be a collaborative effort between the counties and the universities, with mutual benefit for all; the biggest benefactor being the children and families we serve.

Points of Action

The following points of action emerged from the CWUPP evaluation.

Course Fidelity

The CWUPP and ODJFS must determine the desired degree of consistency of instruction across universities. The following strategies may be employed to increase consistency.

1. Provide more education to course instructors to assure Ohio's Child Welfare practice model is being instructed in a manner that aligns with best practice.
2. Ensure 100% of field supervisors have the Child Welfare Courses syllabi. Provide field supervisors with additional content on best practices taught in the Child Welfare 1 and 2 courses.
3. Adjust course timelines to align with recommended timelines for course content and ensure all modules receive recommended time.
4. Establish a benchmark for improvement in overall scores and seek to achieve the benchmark in the coming year.
5. Ensure key assignments (Safety Assessment, Safety Plan, Family Assessment, Case Plan) are required by each university.
6. Make explicit the expectation that instructors follow the syllabi provided by the OCWTP.
7. Use SACWIS reports of CAPMIS tools instead of forms to increase consistency actual field experience.
8. Ensure child welfare course syllabi contain required readings and assignments and provide them to CWUPP state coordinator during the semester they are implemented.
9. Explore the effect of course order and field placement activity order on student assessment scores.
10. Consider increasing consistency across field placement sites.

Technology-Based Learning Labs

1. Continue to streamline the offering of the learning labs in locations and at times when CWUPP students are able to attend.
2. Consider offering learning labs early in the year so students have adequate time to practice new skills before breaks and the end of the academic year.

Program Reach

1. Continue the work that stated in 2018-2019 to engage PCSAs, who had not yet participated in UPP, in considering hosting a UPP intern or hiring a UPP graduate.

Placement Experience

Continue to encourage statewide use of resources to support structured CWUPP field experiences that are consistent across universities and field supervisors. These include “Recommended Practices in Field Instruction, a Guide for Field Education Sites Manual and Notebook”; “Key Field Experience Activities for UPP Interns”; “UPP Readiness Assessment”; “Learning Plan Support”; “Tools for Shadowing”; “Resources for Exit Interviews”; and “Introduction to the Ohio Child Welfare University Partnership Program”; “Child Welfare Field Practicum Resource Handbook for Students.”

1. Provide increased training to CWUPP field supervisors on the variety of tools and resources available to assist with structure, organization, and assuring the field experience is meaningful and exposes CWUPP students to a well-rounded CPS placement.
2. Assure CWUPP interns are receiving timely access to SACWIS passwords so they can quickly learn to navigate the system, thus increasing exposure to real, hands-on child welfare practice.
3. As the content of the child welfare courses flows from the screening of a case through family assessment in the first semester and ends the second semester with case closure, the optimal experience and training opportunity should allow for students to have exposure to both intake and ongoing units to increase the likelihood of transfer of learning and to help the students practice what they have learned in the class room and labs in the field.

4. Continue to encourage field placement activities that are “hands on”, not merely shadowing, and for all field experiences to provide opportunities for students to apply Child Welfare 1 and 2 classroom learning.

Admittance to CWUPP

1. Increase number of CWUPP interns to maximum allowable program limits (if agencies and universities can support the increase).
2. Review and adjust recruitment strategies to increase the pool of CWUPP interns and to target the many reasons students pursue CWUPP.
3. Monitor the results of the YSU, UA field test of the newly developed standard admission criteria and process that was developed during school year 2018 – 2019. If indicated, implement that process and criteria for all UPP universities.

Campus Coordinators

1. Review content and structure of CWUPP specific seminars for possible updates based on recent changes in CW1 and CW2 classes.
2. Ensure all universities conduct meetings with UPP students.
3. Engage counties not hosting CWUPP interns or hiring graduates to determine barriers and possible solutions to increase the statewide reach of CWUPP.
4. Update PCSAO website for CWUPP to make it more up to date, useable, and informative.
5. Increase recruitment efforts to allow for increased program participation.
6. Ensure students complete the CWUPP student survey.
7. Ensure class instructors are teaching according to recommended syllabi.

Future Research

1. Determine if those students placed in both intake and ongoing units fare better than those who do not. It would also be interesting to determine if counties who hire CWUPP graduates assign them to positions similar to their field placements, and whether this is a desirable practice.

2. Determine if timing of CWUPP placement activities affects student knowledge acquisition, for example is there a negative effect if field placement is not completed concurrent with Child Welfare classes?
3. Explore the relationship between field placement in intake/assessment units and case initiation.
4. Repeat this evaluation and compare findings from previous years to assess increases in consistency and achievement of program goals and objectives.
5. Determine whether students with deferments for attending MSW programs accept employment in a PCSAO following graduation.

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