



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
*The Graduate School*  
*G-1 Communications*  
*Box 353770*  
*Seattle, Washington 98195-3770*

Telephone: (206)543-5900

Fax: (206)685-3234

June 26, 2006

To: Phyllis Wise, Provost  
Ana Mari Cauce, Executive Vice Provost  
Office of the Provost, Box 351237

From: Suzanne Ortega, Vice Provost and Dean  
Melissa Austin, Associate Dean for Academic Programs

RE: Review of UW Tacoma Social Work Program

At its meeting of May 1, 2006, the Graduate School Council met with members of the team that reviewed the UWT Social Work Program (Carole A. Schroeder, Associate Professor, Psychosocial and Community Health, and Vice Associate Dean, School of Nursing, Committee Chair, and Marieka M. Klawitter, Associate Professor, Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs), Alan Wood (Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UW Tacoma), Marcie Lazzari (Professor and Director, Social Work Program, UW Tacoma), and Terri Simonsen (Advisor and Administrator, Social Work Program, UW Tacoma). The Master of Social Work (MSW) Degree was established in 1998 with provisional status, the undergraduate degree (Bachelor of Arts with a major in Social Welfare, BASW) began in 2002, and the program had not been previously reviewed. The review committee was also asked to review the proposed Advanced Standing Master of Social Work option. The review committee, including its outside members, held its formal on-site review on February 23-24, 2006.

The review committee reported the Tacoma Social Work program is unequivocally doing an excellent job of fulfilling its mission to educate future social work leaders, practitioners and educators, perform public service, and to conduct research, all of which is designed to improve social welfare. The committee was especially impressed by the supportive community at the UWT campus and the accomplishments of the program with scarce resources. The quality of faculty is high, the staff is excellent, and the students are pleased with the amount of faculty interaction available to them. Further, the program is has developed cutting-edge approaches to issues of diversity.

The major strengths of the program include that:

- it meets regional needs in terms of accessibility for South Sound students and its service to the community;
- it is integral to the Tacoma campus;
- the high quality of academics and academic infrastructure.

Despite these strengths, the committee had some concerns about the program. These concerns include:

- difficulties of joint accreditation with UW Seattle Social Work;
- over-demand on faculty and staff coupled with lack of adequate resources;
- ability of the program to meet current and impending growth demands.

During the discussion, it was noted that the current joint accreditation with the Seattle campus requires that the Tacoma program have the same mission as the Seattle program, when in fact UWT serves a very different community. In particular, the Tacoma program is expected to implement curriculum changes made at the Seattle campus, even though they may not be appropriate to the UWT program. Independent accreditation is one strategy that would resolve this and other existing difficulties. By email correspondence, Dean Edwina Uehara of the Seattle program indicated that they support greater autonomy for the Tacoma program. The Director of the Tacoma program reported that they are ready to move forward in developing a curriculum that would eventually allow independent accreditation, if appropriate resources could be identified to develop a full-time program.

The UWT Social Work Review Committee and the Graduate School Council recommended:

1. Continuation of the degree programs with a review to occur in 10 years, including changing the MSW from provisional to continuing status;
2. Advanced Standing track be approved (this new track was approved by the Graduate School in May, 2006);
3. In ongoing discussions, identify the range of strategies available for mitigating some of the difficulties for the program that are created by joint accreditation. Discussions should include a thorough assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of independent accreditation. The end result of these discussions should be adoption of a mid- to long-range plan that would permit the UWT Social Work program to better respond to local needs and emerging demand for high quality Social Work education.

For more detailed information on the review of this program, please see the Review Committee's written report, submitted on May 1, 2006, and the response from the Director, submitted on May 24, 2006.

As noted above, the review committee recommended continuing status for the BASW and the MSW degree programs, with the next review to be conducted in the 2015-2016 academic year. We concur with this recommendation.

c: Mark Emmert, President  
Patricia Spakes, Chancellor, UW Tacoma  
Alan Wood, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UW Tacoma  
Christine Ingebritsen, Acting Dean and Vice Provost, Office of Undergraduate Education  
Janice DeCosmo, Acting Associate Dean, Office of Undergraduate Education  
Edwina Uehara, Dean, School of Social Work, UW Seattle  
Marcie Lazzari, Professor and Director, Social Work Program, UW Tacoma  
Social Work Program Review Committee  
Graduate School Council  
Adam Grupp, President Graduate and Professional Student Senate  
Augustine McCaffery, Senior Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School