Challenges and Strategies for Program Re-accreditation: EPAS 2015 and beyond

Christine Rine, MSW, PhD

www.buffalostate.edu
Introduction

• **Expectations:**
  1. Demonstrate best practices in online education.

• **Challenge:** do both well.

• **Possible solutions:** administrative and technological strategies.
Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) 2015

- **Overview**

- **Differences between 2008 and 2015:** Crosswalk Between 2015 And 2008 Accreditation Standards
  1. Program Mission & Goals
  2. Explicit Curriculum
  3. Field Education
  4. Implicit Curriculum
EPAS 2008 and 2015 Comparison

1. **Program Mission & Goals** - New focus on institution and across the program as a whole.

2. **Explicit Curriculum**
   - Was ‘Curriculum’ now is ‘Generalist Practice’.
   - Now matrix of how 9 Competencies are implemented vs. explaining how each Competency is addressed per Practice Behavior under them.
   - 2015 not asked for operational definitions of Practice Behaviors; rather operationalize the entire Competency.
   - For MSW Programs: Was ‘Curriculum’ now is ‘Specialized Practice’
     1) Separates generalist and advanced practice with a matrix of implementation not curriculum content (2008).
     2) The term ‘concentration’ was replaced with ‘specialization’ that builds on generalist practice.
     3) 2015 does not ask for new program Competencies but rather how specialization enhances 9 competencies.
EPAS 2008 and 2015 Comparison

3. **Field Education** - Described how vs. ‘does’ or ‘provides’.
   - Brings attention to levels of practice regardless of ‘options’.
   - Added ‘supports student safety’.
   - Increased attention to contacts in field settings.
   - For MSW Programs: Attention to generalist practice within 9 Competencies across levels of practice.
   - Separate and increased attention to Field Instructor credentials and experience.
EPAS 2008 and 2015 Comparison

4. Implicit Curriculum

- **Diversity**- 2015 uses term ‘inclusive’ when describing learning environment and now includes ‘continual’ improvement.
- **Admissions**- For MSW Programs: 2015 added content re: not repeating content of BSW programs.
- **Advisement, retention, and termination**- 2015 has increased focus on making students aware of these processes.
- **Faculty**- 2015 states educational requirements of the ‘majority of faculty’ vs. ‘no fewer than 2’.
- **Administrative structure**- Adds specifics about Field Director experience and administrative support structure for Field Education.
- **Resources**- 2015 asks for description of assistive technology for each program option.
EPAS 2008 and 2015 Comparison

4. Implicit Curriculum

- **Assessment** - Considerable more detail in 2015
  1) Assessment must be done by designated Faculty or Field personnel.
  2) Requires ‘a description of the assessment procedures that detail when, where, and how each competency is assessed for each program option’.
  3) At least two measures to assess each competency.
  4) One of 2 assessment measures must be based on demonstration of the competency in real or simulated practice situations.
  5) Explain how the assessment plan measures ‘multiple dimensions’ of each competency.
  6) Benchmarks for each competency, a rationale for each benchmark, and a description of how it is determined that students’ performance meets the benchmark.
  7) An explanation of how the program determines the percentage of students achieving the benchmark.
  8) Link program changes to data.
Common Challenges = where to find Strategies for Success

1. Institutional infrastructure and support
2. Existing resources
3. Resource development
4. Learning Management Systems (LMS)
5. Integration of third-party technologies
6. Student orientation to programs and platforms
7. Fieldwork methods
8. Administration
9. Supervision
10. Sustainability
11. Pedagogy and assessment processes
Strategies for Success in Learning & Assessment

1. Institutional infrastructure and support - provide access, use, support, and training for institutional products and services.

2. Existing resources - expand use of existing personnel, products, services, and resources.

3. Resource development - pilot, advance, create, share, and acquire new personnel roles, products, services, and resources.

4. Learning Management Systems (LMS) - select, manage, upgrade, and integrate third-party technologies to maximize use and applicability.

5. Integration of third-party technologies - pilot, advance, create, share, and acquire add-ons and plug-ins to maximize use and applicability of LMS and other tools.
Strategies for Success for Learning & Assessment

6. **Student orientation to programs and platforms** - train, support, and provide access to help and tech assistance.

7. **Fieldwork methods** - pilot, advocate for, create, share, and acquire field education management platforms, tools, and resources.

8. **Administration** - support, collaborate, and advance current and emerging products, resources, and personnel roles.

9. **Supervision** - provide and support instructor training, mentoring, and faculty development using best practice models.

10. **Sustainability** - support and advocate for long-term institutional products, personnel, resources, and services.

11. **Pedagogy and assessment processes** - use personnel, products, services, and resources aligned with educational and assessment practices.
How do these strategies translate into actual tools that can bring to quality online education AND meet EPAS?

Considerations:

• What are your needs?
• What are your student’s needs?
• What do you have to work with (supported by the institution vs. open source and free)?
• What have you tried?
• What worked well?
• What did not work well?
• Was there support?
1. **Assessment Management Systems**

- TaskStream; Blackboard Learn™’s Assessment Module; ComplianceAssist; eLumen, LiveText; rGrade™; Tk20; TracDat/Webfolio; Waypoint; Outcomes®; WEAVE Online; and, Institution developed systems to manage assessment data. Institutional/state system levels.

2. **LMS**

- Blackboard Learn™; Angel; Desire2 Learn; eCollege; Moodle; Sakai; Canvas.
Administrative & Tech Tools

3. LMS Integration and 3rd party tech

- Document collaboration - ex. Google Docs
- Video hosting/streaming platforms - ex. Mediasite
- Video capture platforms - ex. YouSeeU
- Voice threading platforms - ex. VoiceThread
- Originality and feedback - ex. Turnitin
- Podcast software/online platforms - ex. WebPod Studio/Screencast-O-Matic
- Video meetings - ex. Adobe Connect
Administrative & Tech Tools

4. Teaching and learning materials
   - Text resources - ex. PowerPoints, test bank
   - eBooks - ex. VitalSource (CourseSmart)
   - Interactive eBooks - ex. MindTap
   - Open source course materials - ex. Ebrary

5. Survey/research/analytics - ex. Qualtrics

6. Supervision - ex. Online Course Observation Procedures

7. Online best practices - ex. Quality Matters

8. Training - ex. SoftChalk

9. Field education - ex. Internship Placement Tracking (IPT)

10. Forms - ex. Adobe® FormsCentral; Google Forms
How do these tools translate into ways to meet EPAS?

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 ▪ LMS  
 ▪ LMS Integration and 3rd party tech |
| **2. Explicit Curriculum** -  
 ▪ Matrix of how 9 Competencies are implemented.  
 ▪ Operationalize the entire Competency.  
 ▪ For MSW Programs: advanced practice builds on generalist matrix enhancing 9 Competencies. | ▪ Assessment Management Systems  
 ▪ LMS  
 ▪ LMS Integration and 3rd party tech  
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▪ ‘Supports student safety’  
▪ Contacts in field settings.  
▪ Field Instructor credentials and experience.
| | ▪ Field Education software and platforms  
▪ Training  
▪ Form platforms |
| 4. **Implicit Curriculum**- | ▪ Assessment Management Systems  
▪ LMS  
▪ LMS Integration and 3rd party tech  
▪ Survey/research/analytics  
▪ Online best practices  
▪ Training  
▪ Field education software and platforms  
▪ Forms platforms |

- ▪ Diversity-‘Inclusive’ learning environment.  
- ▪ Admissions- MSW/ MSW program content delineation.  
- ▪ Advisement, retention, and termination- student awareness.  
- ▪ Administrative structure- Field Director experience and administrative support structure.  
- ▪ Resources- Assistive technology.
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Resources

- "The Promise and the Reality of Distance Education"
- Excerpt: Leadership Manual for Association Leaders in Higher Education UnitsTechnology Bargaining, Policy and Costs
- Research Center Update: Focus on Distance Education
- Distance Learning Faculty Poll
- "Quality on the Line"
- "Distance Education at Postsecondary Education Institutions: 1997-98"
- "What's the Difference?"
- Distance Education at a Glance
- Distance Education in Higher Education Institutions
- The American Center for the Study of Distance Education
- United States Distance Learning Association
- The Distance Education and Training Council
- NEA Guide to Teaching Online Courses
- World Association for Online Education
- Worried in Cyberspace: Asynchronous Anxiety
- Moving beyond the hype: A contextualised view of learning with technology in HE
References


www.buffalostate.edu
Questions?

Email addresses to forward material with links?