Slide 1:

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Making the Most of Face-To-Face Time in Blended and Online Programs: The Annual Summer Institute

Michigan State University School of Social Work

Slide 2:

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Introductions

- **Paul Freddolino**, PhD: Director of Distance Education and Technology; Professor
- ~~Tina~~ Blaschke-Thompson, LMSW: Coordinator, Statewide Blended Program; Clinical Instructor
- ~~Glenn~~ Stutzky, LMSW: Senior Clinical Instructor and Program Mascot
- **Kelly Fornwalt**, LLMSW: Academic Advisor, Statewide Blended Program; Clinical Instructor

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Background

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Needs & Opportunities – circa 2004-6

- ~~Ch~~allenges to recruiting adequate student numbers to any one distant off-campus location
- ~~Fa~~culty resistance to travel
- ~~St~~rong commitment to a statewide mission
- ~~Em~~erging technology tools for instruction
- ~~Inc~~reased availability of student technology
- ~~St~~atewide networks of social work agencies and technology providers

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Campus-Based MSW Programs in 2006

MSW
MSW
MSW
MSW
MSW
MSW
MSW

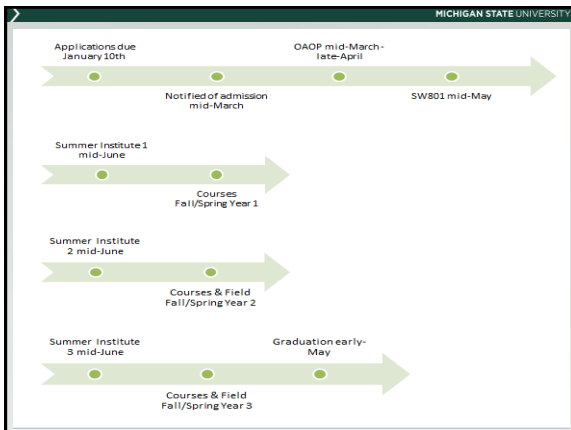**Slide 6:**

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Core Values in Program Development

- ~~Quality~~ social work education
- ~~Im~~portance of **relationships**
- ~~Interact~~ions within and across groups
- ~~C~~entral role of **teams** and **peer learning**
- ~~C~~ore role of **mentoring**
- ~~Im~~portance of **modeling**
- ~~T~~echnology as a **tool**

Importance of ……

COMMUNITY
and
RELATIONSHIPS

Implementation

Applications due
January 10th

OAOP mid-March -
late-April

Notified of admission
mid-March

SW801 mid-May

Summer Institute 1
mid-June

Courses
Fall/Spring Year 1

Summer Institute
2 mid-June

Courses & Field
Fall/Spring Year 2

Summer Institute
3 mid-June

Graduation early-
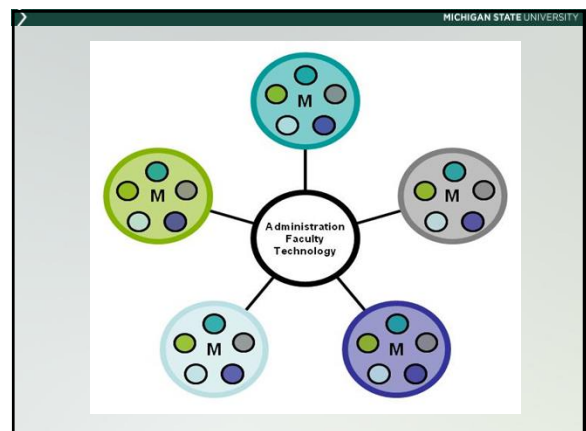May

Courses & Field
Fall/Spring Year 3

First Activities

- Students connect with each other after admitted but even before summer courses begin mid-May
  - This is new since 2015; previously no contact until summer courses began
- First course includes some 'getting to know you' activities, pointing to the Summer Institute (SI) which is REQUIRED ANNUALLY for 3 years
- SI is described to students as the place where **their** face-to-face community will begin

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1st Summer Institute Goals

- Formation of new Learning Communities
- Each group of students and their faculty mentors:
  - Chose a name
  - Create a slogan
  - Select a theme song (for the first year)
  - Design and enter into a Group Contract

Administration
Faculty
Technology

Learning Communities

Team Development

- Team building by purposeful design
- Evolution of team building activities:
  - First by professional team builder
  - Then by graduates of the program

General Features – all three years

- Everyone starting in a given year works together
- Mentors/advisers are available for two days
- Students get to interact in person with students in all three contemporaneous cohorts
- Students interact with other students from their region of the state in different cohorts
- Michigan State University as a place and an institution becomes a reality

The Whole Gang

Dimensions

Social | Academic
Practical | Field

Academic

- Course work – one or two courses each summer which are 80% online, with the 20% F2F at SI
- Advising – always available online, by phone, and through videoconference, but during SI students meet the advisor live and in person
- Faculty contact – in addition to meeting summer course faculty, those teaching in Fall and Spring courses meet with students

Field

Varies by the year in the program
- SI 1 – a brief introduction to what will come in Year 2 of the program
- SI 2 – the complete orientation to field
- SI 3 – checking in with students and mentors

Practical

This area has shown the most change since 2006:
- Technology – desktops to laptops, tablets, cells
- Software – from LMS to Google and Youtube…
- A campus tour with a stop for ID cards
- Financial aid
- Sessions on resume-writing and licensure

Social (and FUN)

- Team building exercises to build relationships among cohorts and small learning communities
- Video and other creative "assignments"
- Many meals together, in varying configurations
- A 'fun night' activity different each year – bowling, bingo, boondoggle
- Horizontal and vertical integration to reinforce connectedness

Role of Shared Special Events

- The family that plays together stays together
  - Blended Boondoggle
  - Blended Cowboy Bowl-A-Rama
  - Blended Bingo (celebrity "Callers" - Bob & Betty)

Special Events

Final Ceremony

- Importance of tradition
- Learning Community projects
- Presented with 1/3 of a "diploma"

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Student Evaluations

- Completed each summer for CQI
- Includes program, content, schedule, facilities
- Allows us to test new ideas
  - E.g., community programs
- Drives changes over time
- Part of our assessment plan for CSWE

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Examples of Changes

- Staggered arrival and departure to reflect actual time needed for required activities
- More unscheduled time to work on group projects
- Session on self-care all three summers
- More access to summer course instructors
- More coffee….

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By Comparison –
how others use F2F components

If there is a face to face component it tends to be only once in a program, and generally single-purposed for:
- General orientation to the program
- Field orientation
- Skills assessment

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Looking Ahead

- SI will continue to be a vital part of the program
- Tweaks and adjustments will be made based on feedback, experience, etc.
- Some features are being replicated in our other blended/hybrid programs
- FUN will always be an important aspect of SI
  - For students and administration!
  - Teamwork makes the dream work!

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Questions?

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- Advanced Standing Program: http://www.socialwork.msu.edu/msw/AS_program.php?spottabs=3