

Integrating Substance Use Disorder Education at an Urban Historically Black College and University: Development of a Social Work Addiction Training Curriculum

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Substance use disorders continue to have adverse consequences for a significant number of individuals and families. Despite the increasing need for behavioral health clinical social work practitioners trained to effectively work with this population, social work programs continue to lag behind in providing courses, which will adequately address this need. According to the Council of Social Work Education, approximately 4.7% of accredited social work programs had one or more required course offerings related to addressing substance use disorders. The purpose of this article is to address the identified gap by describing the development of a content-specific curriculum related to addressing substance use disorders while also providing a working framework for other Master of Social Work programs to consider.

Keywords: social work; substance use disorder; workforce development; curriculum development

Social work professionals have traditionally been employed in various practice settings such as mental health, homeless, child and family services, hospitals, schools, domestic violence, and criminal justice oriented agencies and programs (Straussner & Vairo, 2007). As such, social workers have often been the primary service providers for individuals and families that experience substance use disorders and the associated consequences (Whitaker, Weismiller, & Clark, 2006). According to two previous workforce studies conducted by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), a large majority, 71%–87%, of social workers reported working with a client that has been impacted by a substance use disorder (O’Neil, 2001; Whitaker et al., 2006). The social work practices and interventions used are consistent with professional standards, which require social workers to be knowledgeable about the “processes and dynamics of substance use, including abuse,

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dependency, and recovery. Social workers also need to have the knowledge and ability to work with clients to develop effective treatment plans using existing and emerging resources, including evidence-informed practices” (NASW, 2013, p. 3). Despite substance use disorders continuously being a relevant and growing clinical issue, very few schools of social work require that students take a course with a specific focus on addressing substance use disorders (Senreich & Straussner, 2013).

A study of U.S.-based social work schools conducted by Quinn (2010) found that only 6.5% of Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)-accredited programs had a substance use disorder concentration or clinical track. Moreover, 4.6% of surveyed programs “offered courses under the title of special topics or current themes but did not indicate the theme of substance abuse explicitly” (Quinn, 2010, p. 9). This is extremely problematic because the landscape for addressing substance use disorders continues to shift toward more service integration meaning social workers will need to have an increased skills set to address more complex issues such as substance use disorders (Lundgren & Krull, 2014). Currently, there are no CSWE accreditation requirements that specifically outline education around addressing substance use disorders. As such, it is left up to each program independently to decide if and how much substance use disorder content should be integrated into the existing curriculum. The purpose of this paper is to address the identified gap by describing the development of a content specific curriculum related to addressing substance use disorders while also providing a working framework for other Master of Social Work (MSW) programs to consider.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Substance use disorders have been an ongoing public health concern for many decades. According to the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, an estimated 22.5 million Americans age 12 years or older had a substance use disorder. Further analysis indicated 17.0 million people with an alcohol use disorder, 7.1 million people with an illicit drug use disorder, and an estimated 2.6 million people with both alcohol and illicit drug use disorder (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2015). Consequently, substance use disorders are not limited to the adult population. A large portion of the youth population, approximately 47%–50%, have experimented with at least one illicit substance in their lifetime prior to their completion of high school, with the most commonly used substances being alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana (Johnston, O’Malley, Miech, Bachman, & Schulenberg, 2016). Among high school seniors, approximately 58% had tried alcohol in the past 12 months with 35% reporting alcohol use within the past month (Johnston et al., 2016). Moreover, approximately 35% of the seniors surveyed reported marijuana use within past 12 months with 21% reporting use in past 30 days and one out of seven reporting daily use (Johnston et al., 2016).

The alarming rates of use within our society are problematic given that research has shown that those who engage in substance use experience greater negative consequences associated with prolonged use such as high-risk behaviors, co-occurring mental health issues, family conflict, contact with legal system, and health-related issues (Browne, Clubb, Wang, & Wagner, 2009; Elliott, Huizinga, & Menard, 2012). In addition, the overall cost to society is estimated to be greater than \$700 billion

annually as a result of accidents, injury, law enforcement, health, lost productivity, and death (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2015). On the other hand, research related to the effectiveness of substance use disorder treatment has shown overall reductions in substance use and the associated negative consequences (Burrow-Sánchez, Minami, & Hops, 2015; Sobell, Sobell, & Ward, 2013; Tanner-Smith, Wilson, & Lipsey, 2013). Nonetheless, in 2014, approximately 80% of individuals aged 12 years or older who were in need of substance use disorders treatment did not seek it or even recognize that they had a substance use problem (SAMHSA, 2015).

The gap between problem identification and accessing treatment presents a unique opportunity for social workers. Research has estimated that 71% to 87% of social workers have reported encountering or working with substance abusing clients either through referral or direct practice (O'Neill, 2001; Rapp, Li, Siegal, & DeLiberty, 2003; Whitaker et al., 2006). These encounters primarily occur in non-substance use disorder treatment settings such as health, mental health, social services, HIV/AIDS treatment, nursing and assisted living facilities, intimate partner violence and trauma centers, employee assistance programs, and hospital settings. However, many social workers lack the experience or training to appropriately address the issue in a meaningful way to enhance substance use disorder treatment engagement (Bina et al., 2008).

The lack of identifying and diagnosing substance use disorders by social workers can be attributed to lack of education and training in specific substance use disorder identification and intervention methods (Lundgren et al., 2011). Social work education and training in the area of substance use disorder screening and treatment continues to lag behind the needs of an ever-increasing demand for workforce enhancement (Quinn, 2010). A web-based analysis of 216 CSWE program showed that most (85.7%) of accredited schools did not offer a specialization in addiction training and only 4.7% had one or more required course offerings in related to addiction (Wilkey, Lundgren, & Amodeo, 2013). As described by Quinn (2010), "The lack of training and dedicated coursework in the field of substance abuse by Masters of Social Work programs is so significant that this deficiency can only [be] described as [emphasis added] *institutional denial or minimization*" (p. 10). To address the existing gap and lack of substance use disorder training among social workers, the School of Social Work at Morgan State University, a historically Black college and university founded in 1867 has developed a curriculum to increase students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in addressing client with substance use disorders. The following section of this article describes the process used to guide and develop specific curriculum related to addressing substance use disorders and to provide a possible working framework for other MSW programs situated in urban environments to use as a way to conceptualize and develop an educational curriculum which enhances student knowledge and practical skills.

Overview of the Guiding Theoretical Frameworks

Afrocentric Theoretical Perspective. An important part of the substance use disorder curriculum development process was to ensure that the overall guiding theoretical perspective of the School of Social Work remained embedded within this new program. The School of Social work has a strong urban focus and is guided by the principles of Afrocentric social work. This theoretical perspective is "a method of

social work practice based on traditional African philosophical assumptions that are used to explain and to solve human and societal problems” (Schiele, 1997, p. 803). The three fundamental assumptions are as follows: (a). individual identity is hinged on a collective identity, (b) the spiritual aspect of human is as legitimate as the material aspect, and (c) the effective approach to knowledge is epistemologically valid (Schiele, 1996). The Afrocentric theoretical perspective challenges social workers to understand human behavior and shape their practice interventions within the context of African culture and traditions.

In writing about the importance of the Afrocentric theoretical perspective regarding the School of Social Work at Morgan State University, Dean Anna McPhatter (2015) writes,

The African-centered perspective is essential as a theoretical concept that forces urban social workers to think differently and reflectively about the African American experience in the United States and how that experience evolves from deeply rooted cultural values, folkways, family structures, and individual and community behaviors. It reminds the social worker that African American people are not, in fact, “willy-nilly” mimicking the White world and that African American culture, language, dialects, child-rearing practices, and civic and social institutions of support are historic, well developed, and thoughtfully executed every single day despite the obstacles that exist in the communities. Moreover, the African-centered perspective enables the urban social worker to draw on a number of approaches for working with African American individuals, families, and communities. (p. 5)

As previously mentioned, the Afrocentric theoretical perspective has been used as a critical guide to educating and training social workers at Morgan State University. It serves as the framework for conceptualizing urban social work practice and is integrated throughout the mission statement and curriculum course work.

Systems Theory. Within the context of the larger guiding Afrocentric theoretical perspective, the MSW program also employs a systems theory perspective (inclusive of the ecological approach) regarding the existing curriculum and development of new curriculum (i.e., substance use disorders). Systems theory examines human behavior in terms of complex systems (both large and small) and highlights the intersection and influences of multiple interrelated components (Payne, 2014). Within the MSW program, curriculum development integrates the various system levels (micro, mezzo, and macro) to conceptualizing and understanding social work practice within the urban environment. This approach allows for social work students to examine societal problems from the viewpoint that when addressing micro level issues, other systems particularly at the mezzo and macro levels must be considered during the intervention process. The inverse of this is also true at the macro level and how those interventions will “trickle down” to the micro level. Simply put, systems theory allows for the understanding of the interrelated parts of the whole system and how organizations, communities, and families are directly involved in resolving issues even at the individual level (Sabatier & Weible, 2014).

The influence of the overarching Afrocentric theoretical perspective coupled with systems theory allows for students within the MSW program to understand social problems from the unique perspectives of African Americans within the urban environment. It provides students with the knowledge and skills to effectively understand their role as social workers within the uniqueness of an urban setting. McPhatter (2015) provides the following five fundamental principles as a guide

to understanding the intersection of the theoretical perspectives for Morgan State University's School of Social Work:

1. Society is not color-blind; therefore race, ethnicity, culture, gender, disability, language of origin, and sexual orientation, always matter.
2. Eurocentric values, worldviews, traditions, development and dissemination of knowledge, and practice interventions do not reflect the history and life experiences of people of African descent, and therefore are largely ineffective as currently practiced within the broad arena of professional social work.
3. Engagement with African Americans within an urban context by necessity includes the environmental context; history; experiences of structural oppression; classism; internalized oppression, as well as strengths and resilience.
4. Urban social workers have an ethical obligation to know and understand the landscape that makes up the lives of the people they serve and must always work toward the goal of cultural competency and effectiveness in carrying out their professional roles.
5. Individuals and families residing in inner cities and urban environments are heavily impacted by the seemingly insurmountable social and economic problems they face. Working to help urban individuals and families must be approached equally within the context of working to help communities become well. It is our belief that urban people can rarely achieve wholeness when their communities are not whole. (pp. 2-4)

The selected theoretical perspectives provide the foundation for existing and newly developed courses and curriculums. All of the courses throughout the MSW program are infused with the guiding theories in mind. Newly developed courses are constructed with the emphasis on continuing the mission of urban social work and complementing the existing social work curriculum.

Instructional Design Model. Critical to the development of the curriculum was to consider how to best ensure MSW students were able to understand and apply the concepts related to the substance use disorders curriculum. As such, the curriculum was developed using a hybrid instructional design model which not only included some aspects of the traditional objectivist learning approach but also ensured diverse learning opportunities through the use of a constructivist approach. The use of the constructivist learning approach provided an opportunity for students to develop their own knowledge through the process of active participation. Learning within each course was facilitated through a collaborative learning environment which supports autonomy, active engagement, reflectivity, and generativity (Moallem, 2001). Jonassen (1999) identified eight instructional design principles which were used in developing or modifying courses within the curriculum. Table 1 is reflective of those principles and brief examples of how they were integrated and used within the curriculum.

As previously discussed, the development of the substance use disorders curriculum entailed a thorough examination of the guiding principles within the School of Social Work and MSW program while ensuring that effective and appropriate curriculum design was used to stimulate the learning environment for adult learners (Figure 1). The Afrocentric paradigm was used to develop the context and worldview to understanding social work practice with African Americans. Systems theory was used as part of the guiding framework to understand the complexities of substance use disorders within the context of social work practice. Constructivist instructional design was used to ensure a collaborative and adaptive learning environment for students interested in learning about substance use disorders.

TABLE 1. Constructivist Principles of Instructional Design

Design Principles	Curriculum Development Examples
Create real-world environments that employ the context in which learning is relevant.	Attending self-help groups and treatment programs
Focus on realistic approaches to solving real-world problems.	Field experience in agency that addresses substance use disorders and/or behavioral health
The instructor is a coach and analyzer of the strategies used to solve these problems.	Student presentations and reaction papers with instructor feedback
Stress conceptual interrelatedness, providing multiple representations or perspectives on the content.	Courses build on previous course beginning with required introductory course
Instructional goals and objectives should be negotiated and not imposed.	Students have autonomy regarding various aspects of required assignments
Evaluation should serve as a self-analysis tool.	Student presentations with student and instructor feedback; discussion board posts
Provide tools and environments that help learners interpret the multiple perspectives of the world.	Multiple learning mediums: textbooks, documentary, journals, news, practical experiences
Learning should be internally controlled and mediated by the learner.	Students engage and discuss “hot topics,” which are student selected.

Moreover, because explicitly addressing substance use disorders has not been a priority for a large majority of social work programs, there was minimal guidance as to how and what approaches should be used. The guiding approach used for this curriculum could serve as an example for other social work programs that are considering the development of a substance use disorders curriculum.

History of School of Social Work and Master of Social Work Program

This article is based on the development of the substance use disorders curriculum at Morgan State University’s School of Social Work. The school was originally formed in 1969, it was known as the Undergraduate Social Welfare Program in the Department of Sociology, College of Liberal Arts. It was not until 1975 that the program received departmental status and the name was changed to Department of Social Work. The social work program received approval by the Council on Social Work Education in 1971. In 1975, it became one of the first undergraduate programs in the country to receive accreditation by this body. The department has continually received reaccreditation since that time (Morgan State University,

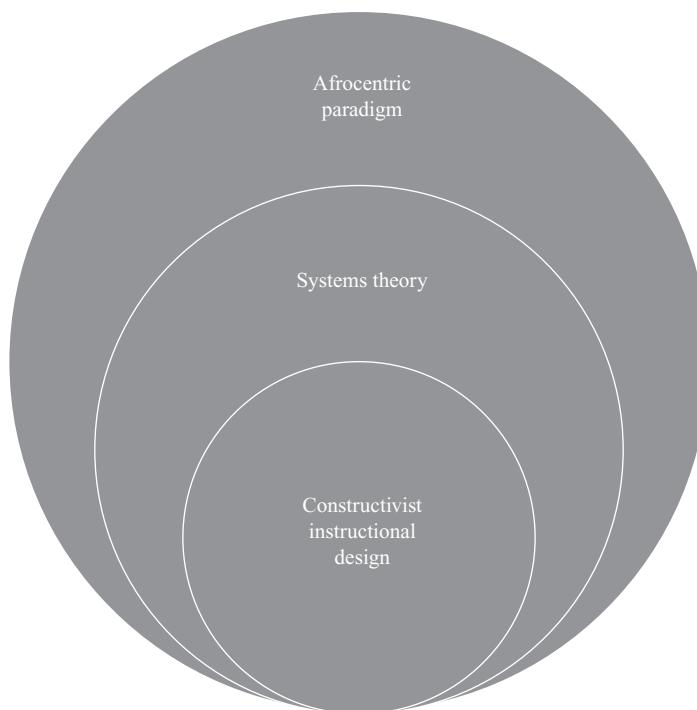


Figure 1. Guiding Framework for Social Work Addiction Training (SWAT) Curriculum.

2016). In 2005, the department reached new growth and expanded to add a master's and doctor of philosophy program. Both programs have adapted the rich tradition of enhancing the knowledge base of future social workers and leaders in America with a specific interest in African American populations and urban environments. Pursuant to the department's continuing efforts to improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of academic programs, effective November 16, 2009, the Department of Social Work was restructured to become a school. The School of Social Work has *required* undergraduate students in the BSW program to take a course in Chemical Dependency and community violence for more than 25 years as part of their graduation requirements.

Since its inception in 2005, the MSW program has also *required* all foundations students to take Chemical Dependency & Violence. The course focus was on learning about substance use disorders and the correlating social and behavioral problems that continue to plague America and many other countries. The course was designed to increase student awareness and understanding of the various prevention, early intervention, and treatment roles available to MSW-level practitioners involved in understanding, reducing, and ameliorating problems associated with substance use disorder. The course also places special emphasis on achieving substance use disorder competencies as they relate to social work values and ethics, and diversity. Since the initiation of the MSW program, SOWK 509 has gone through several iterations which included modifications to course content and course name.

As part of the curriculum development process, the impetus for this course was to provide all MSW students with a foundation of knowledge which would assist them in identifying and employing proper interventions to clients when substance use disorders are identified. The final title for the SOWK 509 course was *Topics in Addiction* which is inclusive of various topics that are considered relevant to foundation-level social work students.

Developing the Social Work Addiction Training Curriculum

The Social Work Addiction Training (SWAT) curriculum was developed given the high need and demand for social workers that are trained in behavioral health (Lundgren & Krull, 2014). As such, the development of the training curriculum was influenced by the need for our urban social work students to understand the effects of substance use disorders within the context of the African American community. Baltimore is an urban area that has a high need for health professionals that are adequately trained to address substance use disorders. According to the Baltimore City Department of Health, of the estimated 645,000 residents, approximately 60,000 of them have substance use disorders, more specifically 75% reporting heroin use (Spencer, Petteway, Bacetti, & Barbot, 2015). Moreover, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) report estimates that of the 1,039 overdose deaths reported in Maryland, 46% occurred in Baltimore (DHMH, 2015). The immense need to provide timely and appropriate education for MSW students to better address the needs of the surrounding urban environment was critical.

The overall goal of the SWAT program was to integrate a diverse range of knowledge and practice skills across the many specializations of social work and prepare our students to meet the needs of their clients and agencies. Research has shown that a large majority of social workers come in contact with individuals with substance use disorders (Wells, Kristman-Valente, Peavy, & Jackson, 2013). Thus, MSW students are required to take the initial course within the standard MSW curriculum: SOWK 509—Topics in Addiction. This was designed as an all-encompassing introductory course that covers topics such as history of drugs, biological influences, various prevention and intervention approaches, and drug policy in the United States. As students' progress through the MSW program, they can obtain enhanced training in addiction treatment by taking curriculum courses in the SWAT program. The courses (with descriptions) that make up the SWAT program include the following:

- *SOWK 509: Topics in Addiction*—This course addresses the biological and neurological bases of addictive processes and the various substances of addiction. The goal is to assist students in conceptualizing the role that biologically based etiological factors play in the development of addictive disorders and how those factors serve to promote continued drug/alcohol use despite serious consequences. Students learn the strengths and weaknesses of various theoretical frameworks used to explain addictive behaviors. This course examines addiction issues within the urban environment with a heavy focus on community violence, social justice, and diversity.
- *SOWK 601: Psychopathology and Clinical Intervention*—This course focuses on three areas: The *first area* (major emphasis) is for students to become familiar with the

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed., *DSM-5*) as a tool for diagnosis and treatment planning. We approach this area from a strength-based perspective using other supportive academic tools. Using this manual as one of the major texts, an introduction is given of the descriptive approach for diagnosis of mental disorders. Students are expected to understand the specific and varied criteria of childhood and adult disorders from a culturally competent perspective. There is an emphasis on detailed knowledge gained through comprehensive biopsychosocial assessments leading to the skillful diagnosis of identified disorders. The *second area* of emphasis uses case studies which represent the major mental disorders. Connections are made from developmental theories to diagnosis; treatment planning, provision of treatment, and current best practices. The *third area* of emphasis is on the exploration of culture and controversies surrounding the field of diagnosis and treatment to including possible race and class bias and the effects of diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders on populations at risk, including poor, minority, and foreign-born populations.

- *SOWK 680: Assessment and Treatment of Addictive Behaviors*—This course provides students with the skills to engage in clinical social work practice with addicted populations. Central to this course is a focus on the development of addiction practice competencies that are associated with positive treatment outcomes including addiction screening, assessment, education, and treatment services. Emphasis is placed on the development of clinical skills, which address substance use disorders.
- *SOWK 681: Ethics in Social Work Practice With the Addictions*—This course explores the many actual and potential ethical issues inherent in the social work profession. The focus will be on the student being able to identify ethical issues when they occur (or as they are developing) and apply a decision-making model to solving the issue. Key areas of inquiry will include ethical issues in the social work practice such as boundaries and multiple relationships, confidentiality, client and practitioner rights and responsibilities, professional relationships, and credentialing/regulating agencies. A specific focus will be on ethical issues relevant to working with addicted populations, including the impact of federal confidentiality regulations and working with mandated client populations.

Each course is three credits and students who chose to specialize in the addiction training program must complete all four courses (180 classroom hours) and a field placement with an agency that specializes in addressing substance use disorders and/or behavioral health interventions. Courses for the curriculum were designed to integrate evidence-based practice interventions that focus on addressing substance use disorders in social work practice. In addition, they were developed to correspond with the growing demand of adult learners to have more flexible learning options (Cercone, 2008). Each course is offered in face-to-face, hybrid, and online learning formats. The specific courses in the SWAT program were developed with guidance from the Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists (governing body for addiction counselors) to ensure that upon completion, students would be eligible to obtain certification or licensure (pending review of other requirements) as an alcohol and drug counselor. Moreover, to ensure consistency with accreditation standards, each course was developed to meet specific Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards requirements. The overall learning objectives for the SWAT program are listed in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Learning Objectives: Social Work Addiction Training Curriculum

Overall Goal: To integrate a diverse range of knowledge and practice skills across the many specializations of social work and prepare our students to meet the needs of their diverse clients and agencies.

- 1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly in the area of substance use disorder interventions.
 - 2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice in the area of substance use disorder interventions.
 - 3 Apply critical thinking to inform oneself and others and communicate professionally in the area of substance use disorder interventions.
 - 4 Engage diversity and difference in practice with those having, or involved with, persons with substance use disorders.
 - 5 Understand how to advance human rights and social, political and economic justice for substance abusing persons and/or those affected by them.
 - 6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research in the area of substance use disorder interventions.
 - 7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment to situations involving substance abusing persons and/or those affected by them.
 - 8 Understand how to engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
 - 9 Respond to contexts that shape practice with substance abusing persons and/or those affected by them.
 - 10 Comprehend the various important components involved in engaging, assessing, intervening, and evaluating client systems, that is, individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities impacted by substance use disorders.
 - 11 Develop or increase familiarity with the capabilities and applications of electronic technology for information management and organizational problem solving.
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The SWAT courses are designed to build upon information learned from the previous course. SOWK 509—Topics in Addiction is the introductory course, which is *required* by all MSW students. This course is followed by SOWK 601 and then the addiction-specific curriculum requirements of SOWK 680 and 681. Table 3 provides an example of the current module-specific topics for each 15-week course. These courses can be modified to fit condensed summer sessions as well as an 8-week model. Each of the courses is uniquely designed to provide MSW students with multiple ways to learn and apply information related to the learning objectives. Students meet the stated objectives in each course and throughout the SWAT program through a combination of the following ten learning activities:

- Participation in online discussion boards
- Completion of module quizzes and course examinations (mid-semester and final examinations)
- Attending community groups (12 step and/or family support groups)

TABLE 3. Weekly Module Topics

	SOWK 509	SOWK 601	SOWK 680	SOWK 681
1	Introduction to Substance Use Disorders	Introduction to the Course	Introduction to Clinical Assessment & Treatment of Addictive Behaviors	Introduction to Professional Ethics and Ethical Thinking
2	Prevalence of Drug Use in the United States	Critically Thinking About Mental Health Assessment and Diagnosis	Initial Engagement, Therapeutic Alliance, & Screening	Ethical Choices in the Helping Professions
3	Perspectives of AODA	The Mental Status Exam and Clinical Assessment	Motivational Interviewing	Values and Professional Ethics
4	Specific Drugs: Depressants & Stimulants	Child & Adolescent Mental Health	Integrating SBIRT Into Social Work Practice	Linking Ethics to Social Justice
5	Specifics Drugs: Hallucinogens & Over-the-Counter	Cultural Competence in Assessment and Diagnosis	Assessment Instruments	Ethical Theory Analysis & Application
6	Neuropsychopharmacology of Drug Use	Bipolar, Depressive, and Related Disorders	DSM-5 & Diagnostic Summaries	Critical Examination and Use of Code of Ethics (NASW & NAADAC)
7	Substance Use Disorder Prevention	Anxiety Spectrum Disorders	Assessing Vulnerable Populations & Cultural Competency	Reducing and Preventing Ethical Harms
8	Mid Semester Examination	Mid Semester Examination	Mid Semester Examination	Mid Semester Examination
9	The Role of Motivation— Motivational Interviewing	Substance Related & Addictive Disorders	Assessing Co-Occurring Disorders	Whose Responsibilities are Professional Ethics?

(Continued)

TABLE 3. Weekly Module Topics (*Continued*)

	SOWK 509	SOWK 601	SOWK 680	SOWK 681
10	Introduction to Substance Use Disorder Screening & Assessment Tools	Disruptive, Impulse-Control and Conduct Disorders	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	Legal Issues, Social Work Regulation and Malpractice Considerations
11	Treatment Models and Philosophies	Psychotic Disorders	Harm Reduction Approaches (Medication Assisted Treatment)	Social Work Ethics in the Digital Age
12	Harm Reduction, Decriminalization, Religion/Spirituality and “Specialized Approaches”	Personality Disorders	Family Treatment Approaches	Evidence-Based and Evidence-Informed Practice Standards in Social Work
13	Diverse Populations: Women, Elderly, LGBTs, Adolescents, and Other Diverse Populations	Mental Health With Older Adults	Group Treatment Approaches	Self-Care, Impairment, and Other Stress-Related Issues in Social Work
14	Understanding America’s Drugs & Law Enforcement Policies	Sexual and Gender Identify Disorders, Other conditions that may be a focus of clinical attentions	Treatment Goals & Treatment Planning	Multicultural Perspectives and Diversity Issues
15	Final Examination	Final Examination	Final Examination	Final Examination

Note. AODA = alcohol and other drugs of abuse; SBIRT = screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment; DSM-5 = *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.); NASW = National Association of Social Workers; NAADAC = National Association for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors; LGBT = lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender.

- Community treatment center visit, interview, and presentation
- Addressing diversity in treatment paper
- Online videos and documentaries
- Complete required reaction papers
- Agency evaluations
- Analyzing case scenarios and vignettes
- Role play

The SWAT program was designed to provide MSW student with the necessary knowledge to effectively screen, assess, and provide clinical interventions to individuals and family affected by substance use disorders.

Field Education

An important component of the SWAT program and the signature pedagogy of social work education is the aspect of field education. As part of the curriculum development phase, it was important to ensure the integration of the field experience to complement the learning objectives of the training program. Students enrolled in the SWAT program are matched to a field education placement during their advance clinical (24 hr) year that specifically addresses addiction and strengthens the practice aspects of addiction treatment. As part of the integration of addiction treatment into social work field education, students are provided opportunities to be trained in and practice the 12 core functions as outlined by the International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (ICRC), the national credentialing body for addiction counselors. These 12 core functions are screening, intake, orientation, assessment, treatment planning, counseling, case management, crisis intervention, client education, referral, reports and record keeping, and consultation with other professionals. To ensure appropriateness and consistency, each field education site must have the following requirements to be considered an appropriate field placement for students in the SWAT program:

- Clinical social work supervisor licensed at the advance clinical licensure level with at least 2 years working with addicted population
- Strong focus on social work practice with addicted populations
- Attendance at annual field instructor training
- Adherence to memorandum of understanding (MOU) between school and agency
- Provision of appropriate student supervision as outline by School of Social Work field education department

Given the location of Morgan State University, which is situated in an urban metropolitan area, there was an abundance of field placements available to students. This provided for the practice of addiction treatment in various settings, which include for profit, non-profit, hospital, and community based. The multiple learning opportunities across field placement sites provided students with learning and training experiences regarding addiction treatment across the lifespan and among diverse populations. Moreover, this model enhances the ability of students at Morgan State University to meet the needs of the clients they serve while also addressing the demand for increased workforce development.

DISCUSSION

Substance use disorders among the general population is an issue that social workers encounter in various diverse settings. Despite more than 70% of social workers that have reported working with clients that have substance use disorders, most have not had substantial educational training to meet the needs of this population (Straussner & Vairo, 2007). Moreover, most (more than 95%) of social work programs did not have specific required course that address this need, which is a major concern given the increased rates of individuals with substance use disorders that come in contact with social workers (Wilkey et al., 2013).

To address the gap between education and practice, the development of the SWAT curriculum was a natural extension of the required MSW addiction course within the School of Social Work at Morgan State University. According to Quinn (2010), Morgan State University was one of four schools of social work which required all MSW students to take a course which addressed substance use disorders. Given the context and rates of substance use disorder in Baltimore, the enhancement of the curriculum through the development of the SWAT program was relevant and timely. Moreover, the development of an educational curriculum, which enhances MSW student's ability to address substance use disorders, is in line with the professional requirements as established by the NASW. According to the *NASW Standards for Social Work Practice With Clients With Substance Use Disorders* (NASW, 2013), "Social workers shall conduct ongoing assessments of clients to provide clients with substance use disorders with appropriate diagnoses and treatment plans. . . . Social workers shall be knowledgeable of and incorporate information based on assessment and evidence-informed practices in their interventions" (p. 12). Consequently, CSWE does not have current standards around addiction education which address or even support this need to provide students with appropriate curriculum content (Senreich & Straussner, 2013). This conflict between the educational standards created by CSWE and practice standards created by NASW needs to be addressed to provide clearer direction regarding social work practice in this area.

Given that several authors have discussed how social workers historically have had negative responses to these clients who are highly stigmatized and have been reluctant to intervene with them, more education around working this population is warranted (Straussner & Vairo, 2007). Research has demonstrated that the provision of an addiction curriculum for social work students has been beneficial in increasing their perceived knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as attitudes (Senreich & Straussner, 2013). Research has also demonstrated that those that receive more formal academic training in substance use disorders including concept and models had a high perception of their ability in working with substance-using clients as well as higher levels of knowledge, role adequacy, and role legitimacy (Bina et al., 2008; Senreich & Straussner, 2013). Given the dearth of social work programs that have addictions courses, it is imperative for schools of social work to ensure that students are provided with more than practical information which is often gained during field placement. Therefore, the proposed implications are threefold: (a) Social work programs around the nation should begin offering and requiring substance use disorder treatment courses

as part of the standard curriculum. (b) Field supervisors and instructors should begin to offer targeted training and supervising students to address clients with substance use disorder. (c) CSWE should consider including addictions content as a requirement for program accreditation or establish standards for the inclusion of addiction education.

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Funding. Health Resources and Services Administration (5 G02HP279460300).

Acknowledgments. At the time of this publication, Dr. Anthony Estreet was a Scholar with the HIV/AIDS, Substance Abuse, and Trauma Training Program (HA-STTP), at the University of California, Los Angeles; supported through an award from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (R25 DA035692).

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