

**SOCIAL WORK ACCREDITATION** / In social work education, the Commission on Accreditation (COA) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) to accredit baccalaureate and master's degree programs in the United States and its territories. The benchmark model is used and is a systematic, incremental approach to developing a social work program and writing a comprehensive self-study. There are three benchmarks; the first portion of each benchmark consists of specific accreditation standards that the program must be in compliance with, and the second portion consists of standards that must be addressed in draft form. Program development is guided by four visits from the COA commissioners. During each visit the commissioner makes a recommendation about the program's compliance with standards in the first portion of the benchmark and provides consultation on the standards in the second portion. MSSU's Department of Social Work has completed the first benchmark, with the site visit occurring on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015. The site visit resulted in a recommendation by the auditor for CSWE accreditation candidacy status. The COA will meet in February 2016 and we anticipate being approved for candidacy at that time. The next two benchmark events occur in fall 2016 and fall 2017, with an anticipated approval for initial accreditation occurring in February 2018. The first graduating class of BSW's will occur in May 2017. They will graduate from a program 'in candidacy'; however, once we are fully accredited, they are permitted to state their diploma came from a recognized accredited program.

**WRITING COMMITTEE UPDATE** / We will be following the strategic plan outlined with a full cycle of data collection and analysis to be completed by Spring of 2017. This year we will coordinate special training to assist faculty in non-English specialties in learning how to "grade" written communications.

**INTERNATIONAL MISSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE** / Since 2008, MSSU students have studied and lived in over 30 different countries. This year, the program received several more requests than could be supported.

