

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF SYMPOSIUM PAPERS**

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# Highlights of Symposium Papers

## INTRODUCTION

This document represents my efforts to provide participants in the national symposium on Improving the Teaching of Evidence-Based Practice a handy overview – in list form -- of the main points, recommendations and issues found in the symposium’s 8 speaker papers and 4 reactor papers. Although each participant is urged to read each of the 12 papers in advance of the symposium, remembering all that they read won’t be easy. This document aims to jar their memory about highlights that are most relevant to them. Participants are encouraged to keep it handy and refer to it during their all-day breakout session on Tuesday -- focusing, for example, on the section(s) below that are most germane to their breakout session topic(s).

I tried to capture in this list what I thought were the key highlights in each paper and to do so in a fashion that grouped related highlights from different papers together in a logical manner and with a readable sequencing. However, given the short amount of time between my receiving all the papers and my disseminating this outline to participants in advance of the symposium, let me express some important caveats.

I probably omitted some things that some authors might feel should have been included in this list. I might even have unintentionally misunderstood or distorted the points some authors made. I can assure you that any such errors were made without any intentional bias on my part. However, being human, it is quite conceivable that some of my predilections unintentionally affected what I chose to list and how I paraphrased things. In my haste, I may even have left out some quotation marks when I cited some authors verbatim. By the time this material appears in print, of course, time will permit me to correct any such unintended “plagiarism.” For now, I hope it will be acceptable to merely say that (with only a few minor exceptions) what appears below are not my original ideas, but rather my attempt to condense, synthesize and paraphrase the ideas of the authors.

I am sending this outline to the authors in advance of the symposium. They will receive it the same time everyone else does. They will serve as panelists during our Monday afternoon plenary session and will have ample time to correct any of my errors of omission or commission. With that in mind, here’s my list.

### **Problem:**

Recent evidence indicates that interventions of unknown efficacy dominate the social work curriculum space. This evidence indicates that few schools require the teaching of empirically supported interventions in class and fieldwork,

However, there may be fewer obstacles to the teaching of EBP in schools of social work than some have feared. Some evidence suggests that the time may be right to make the needed changes in social work education programs. However, unless changes are made in our service systems and agency programs there may be too many barriers for EBP to be implemented.

## **Definitional Issues: EBP versus EBPs**

There appears to be widespread disparity in the definition of EBP.

Teaching EBPs is not the same as teaching EBP.

Should we even teach EBPs, or just EBP?

Should the definition of EBP include the use of a list of practice methods (EBPs) that have the strongest base of evidence to support their effectiveness? (Such lists seem to be implicit in the way some government agencies and managed care companies define EBP.) Likewise, should it include clinical decision tree support tools provide like Palm Pilots where they can key in symptoms, and in a few moments come up with several best courses of action (EBPs) for those symptoms.

Or is it exclusively just a process? Thyer avers, “EBP does *NOT* produce lists of officially endorsed guidelines. Indeed, the fluid, ever-changing, and self-correcting landscape of scientific advances would make most advocates of EBP somewhat suspicious of any such listing, since by the time it appeared in print additional findings may have rendered it out of date. Similarly, the end-product of EBP is not only *not* a list of approved treatments, it is *not* even a set of practice guidelines.”(p. 11)

Likewise, Shlonsky (p. 3) says, “Simply providing any given client with a treatment that someone considers ‘evidence-based’ is not the *process* of EBP and is philosophically untenable.”

Transparency is the hallmark of evidence-*informed* practice. It is a way to handle uncertainty in “EBPs” in an honest and informed manner, sharing ignorance as well as knowledge.

### **Issues:**

Does emphasizing EBPs make EBP vulnerable to criticisms that it is too mechanistic?

Does *not* teaching EBPs expect too much of busy practitioners with limited time and resources to search and appraise the literature? Also, does it fail to provide students the requisite skills they’ll need to provide EBPs after graduation?

One’s view of EBP versus EBPs will likely influence how one views many of the recommendations that follow.

## **Top-Down versus Bottom-Up**

Some see the value in augmenting the broad process (bottom-up) approach to EBP with a top-down (practice guidelines re evidence-based practices -- EBPs) approach, reasoning that the bottom-up approach often is not feasible for many busy practitioners who may lack time and other resources for it.

Others (such as Gambrill) argue that the top-down approach (with its emphasis on EBPs, treatment manuals and practice guidelines) departs significantly from the process and philosophy of EBP. They reason that it lacks adequate transparency and uncertainty regarding being honest about ignorance as well as knowledge and commonly makes inflated claims such as “well established,” hides research flaws, underplays application problems, “dismisses the importance of clients and practitioners acquiring critical appraisal skills, and ignores local circumstances and individual differences in clients.”

## **Curriculum Issues and Strategies**

EBP is NOT a single semester endeavor and should not be presented to students as such. It should be integrated into courses throughout in the curriculum.

### **Downside Risks:**

Avoid repetitive assignments.

Some students will attempt to use the same review throughout their tenure at the school. Watch out for repeaters! Create a school-wide searchable registry of titles and abstracts and insist on originality. Require students to hand in copies of papers for related classes.

All practice courses should be evaluated by the degree to which they are evidence-based, and those with none or non-supporting evidence should be eliminated from the curriculum.

Course syllabi should provide current evidence from rigorous studies on treatment effectiveness.

Practice courses should focus explicitly on helping students access information about interventions.

Lectures, exercises, and class discussions can foster the skills needed to access evidence, critically assess its qualities and appropriateness, and engage in the

critical, logical, probabilistic thinking required for applying evidence to real-world problems of professional practice.

Inform students about classification systems being used to categorize empirical evidence regarding intervention efficacy and effectiveness as well as to classify assessment tools

Inform students about the empirical support for every assessment and intervention practice taught in the standard curriculum

Give students assignments to search out the evidence-base for every assessment and intervention practice presented to them in the classroom. This would enhance their skills as self-directed learners and place less reliance on what the teacher-authority says is the evidence-base.

EBP examples should be emphasized throughout all of the content areas of the research methods foundation course.

First year courses could focus more on searching and appraising evidence, and second year courses could move toward the seamless integration of circumstances and client preferences and a more nuanced consideration of how other factors (e.g., training, organizational resources, political context) enhance or detract from the adoption of EBP.

Provide far more extensive training in computerized bibliographic data base searching and other information acquisition methods than have hitherto been offered.

Incorporate problem-based instructional methods into all practice courses.

Faculty in specific practice areas should expose students to a broad sampling of systematic reviews, meta-analyses, practice guidelines, scientific journals publishing review articles and research studies, and textbooks/handbooks describing scientifically-supported practice interventions. To the fullest extent possible, all course syllabi and readings should draw upon the best available primary and secondary scientific evidence in a given practice area. It may make sense, in some schools, for a faculty member or committee to review course syllabi for inclusion of such content.

Employ skills-based *in vivo* assessments and paper-and-pencil measures to ensure student-practitioner competency in the methods of EBP prior to graduation.

Students should be required to take at least one semester-long course exposing them to a broad array of bibliographic and other information sources useful for EBP and the most effective means of accessing and utilizing them. Students should be required to demonstrate these skills prior to graduation

Emphasize specialty as opposed to generalist practice education to an unprecedented degree and test for practice competence in specialty practice areas using skills-based assessments.

In many areas, such as prevention and treatment of substance abuse and antisocial behavior, scores of controlled evaluations are being produced annually and dozens of empirically well-established treatment and prevention interventions have been identified. For this and other reasons, the generalist model is pedagogically ill-suited to modern practice demands including the dictates of EBP and should largely be abandoned. If MSW education is to be successful in producing well-informed students capable of delivering evidence-based interventions, it will need to become much more specialty focused. At a minimum, all MSW students should be current with the practice-relevant scientific literature and able to deliver at least one evidence-based intervention in a specific practice area upon graduation.

Ensure that the only research-related curricular offerings required of students are those furthering students' competencies as evidence-based practitioners, given that few MSW students seek doctoral training. The scientist-practitioner model is almost surely not working in social work, where the program span of two years as currently configured is not adequate to achieve competence as a scientist or practitioner. To the extent that the scientist-practitioner model is currently embodied in the curricula of schools of social work nationally (e.g., in courses devoted at least in part to preparing students to conduct their own research or in research practica experiences), we believe that this approach should be replaced with training in the specific methods of EBP. That is, MSW programs exist to train practitioners not scientists or even scientist-practitioners and it is likely that the best practitioners are able to identify, access, and critically appraise available practice-relevant scientific findings, apply the fruits of these efforts and evaluate client outcomes on a real-time basis. Given the time constraints associated with a two-year educational program, students should be required to learn only those aspects of research training required for EBP.

Schools of social work should teach students the ethical importance of transparency in social work practice. That is, student-practitioners should be prepared to provide a description of the scientific rationale and weight of the evidence in support of any practice recommendation they make to clients.

## Field Placements

EBP should be emphasized in all placements.

Social work education needs to create a *client-side teaching model* that is similar to bed-side teaching in the medical profession. That is, it needs to integrate instrumental teaching into the places where social work is practiced.

Truly collaborative school-agency partnerships need to be cultivated, respected, nurtured, and deliberately used to advance EBP (“Bench to trench” will not suffice; rather we need to partner “trench-to-bench and back to trench”) characterized by: mutual transfer of ideas, reciprocal respect and trust, shared decision making, and mutual ownership.

Key stakeholders at all levels need to be engaged in the partnership.

EBP should be an important part of the contract with agencies for field placements. (Will the agency support EBP, provide the resources and supervision for it, etc.?)

Field practicum instructors will need to be provided with EBP training and other supports so as to facilitate their capacity to provide EBP training in actual agency environments. Continuing education programs and field practicum educators should consider joining resources to foster EBP in agencies.

Access to web sites with links to computerized bibliographic data bases and other useful materials for EBP should be provided gratis to field instructors.

To overcome time constraints, encourage students to engage in the EBP process with just one client at a time in their practicum.

Placements that are not evidence-based should be dropped.

### **Issue:**

Is it reasonable to require all field placement agencies to commit to EBP? Would we have enough field placements left? This might be particularly infeasible in rural communities.

## Teaching about EBP

Rather than simply teach the mechanics of EBP, students must learn how to think critically and conceptually about the information to which they are exposed and how to integrate this thinking into practice and policy implications.

Don't just teach that certain interventions are evidence-based – It is not enough to be trained in the techniques of a specific evidence-based practice without knowing when the use of that practice is indicated and counter-indicated.

When teaching specific empirically supported methods, it would not be feasible, nor even desirable, to attempt to teach all of the assessment tools and interventions known to be empirically supported. However, those that are directly relevant to the student's specialized area of study should be taught in both class and field so that a beginning level of competence is developed through classroom learning and supervision.

Use team approach so that students can divide the EBP process tasks and thus make the process more feasible.

Use active learning that involves students in using the EBP process to formulate questions and make decisions related to their practicum or their special interests.

Ensure that students learn methods to evaluate the effectiveness of treatments, programs, and services.

Students should be free to express criticism of EBP, but if so instructors should use Socratic questioning (in a curious, non-threatening manner) asking them to offer a reasonable alternative.

Early on students should learn about the history of interventions with iatrogenic effects and the notion that social workers can cause harm. This should be related to ethics, and students could be asked how they'll feel if after many years of practice they find out that they have done more harm than good.

Schools of Social Work should provide students with relatively extensive levels of training in information science methods. Early on, have a librarian come in to demonstrate using the various databases and to provide basic search tips. This should be augmented with doing an EBP search with methodological filters (called 'MOLES' by Gibbs, 2003) and an arranging of evidence in terms of its methodological rigor and subject specificity.

Each semester Matthew Howard brings in at least 20 substance abuse journals to his substance abuse class and describes the name of the journal, when it was established and under what auspices, the types of articles it publishes, and the average level of methodological rigor of articles published in the journal.

Teaching students to actually implement evidence-based practices with fidelity is particularly challenging and will likely require particular resources, including intervention manuals and training manuals, fidelity measures, and outcomes measures that are specific to the particular practice being taught.

Instructors should make students aware of the barriers that may exist in implementing evidence-based interventions in a real-world context. If these issues are not explicitly discussed and actively addressed, the frustration resulting from students' experience of disconnects between classroom and fieldwork is likely to compound any contextual barriers.

Schools of social work should adopt the methods of problem-based learning. Problem-based learning offers significant advantages over more conventional didactic approaches, such as lectures, because it exposes students to the uncertainties and complexities of practice and provides students with the experiences and tools to ask answerable questions, identify and evaluate pertinent scientific findings, apply them in practice, and evaluate intervention outcomes. Because it involves practice situations similar to those they will encounter over the course of their practice careers, the methods of problem-based learning can help students learn EBP skills in a manner that will generalize to real world settings.

Students can be asked to compare EBPs supported by governmental agencies to the practices used in their field placement agencies. Likewise, they can be asked to compare their agency practices and government agency lists to the reviews of the Cochrane Collaboration and the Campbell Collaboration.

### **Alternative Emphases:**

- a) Spend more time preparing our students to deliver methods of assessment and treatment that are “evidence-based.”
- b) Rather than emphasize specific interventions that might be obsolete in the future, we should put more emphasis on teaching our students how to ask practice-relevant, client-oriented questions; how to access valid and practice relevant information; and how to critically use this information to inform practice. EBP should be taught from an epistemologically sound perspective emphasizing the tentative nature of all scientific knowledge. That is, training should emphasize that there are no “evidence-based” treatments per se, only interventions that differ in the nature and degree of their scientific support. Students should be taught to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different research designs and the types of questions such designs best suited to answer.

## **Teaching EBP at the Macro Level**

A wide array of EBP-related studies of macro-level practice exists, including topics such as community development, micro-enterprise loans, promoting citizen participation, social planning, and leadership development and training.

The Cochrane Collaboration website has systematic reviews of policy interventions.

EBP involves making decisions based on research about the intended and unintended effects of policies.

Thyer recommends (p. 14): “Convey to students the idea that the topic of macro-level practice lends itself to empirical evaluation as much as does evaluating the outcomes of social work practice at the clinical level. Indeed, it can be contended that the critical evaluation of social policies, their intended and unintended consequences, both short and long term; the promoting of empirically supported policies; and the active repudiation of ineffective or harmful policies, are even more worthy of our attention than is direct practice. We need to proactively repudiate the objection that the principles of EBP have little or no applicability to the level of macro-level practice.”

## **School-wide Recommendations**

All faculty and field instructors should be trained in the methods and pedagogy of EBP.

Faculty within a school need to reach a consensus as to minimum evidentiary criteria for defining evidenced-based practices and should identify several practices that meet those criteria. (This assumes that it is okay to include an EBP approach as opposed, as opposed to an exclusively process-oriented approach.)

A faculty committee should be responsible for tracking and implementing demonstrably effective instructional innovations related to EBP and assisting with their implementation.

Faculty research should be related to EBP.

New student orientations should emphasize EBP and connect it to faculty research.

Provide library holdings and data base access for EBP.

Guest speakers, lecture series, visiting scholars, and continuing education opportunities to make empirical evidence more available and accessible.

Reward faculty who conduct rigorous evaluations of methods by which social work education might be made more effective vis-à-vis promotion of EBP or who model superior pedagogical skills in relation to EBP instruction.

EBP training programs should be provided for full time and adjunct professors who require instruction in the methods and pedagogy of EBP.

Inform adjunct faculty of evidence-based research presentations on campus that have relevance to their course topic or area of interest, which could in turn be integrated into a teaching module.

Assign an adjunct faculty liaison who would work collaboratively with tenure-track faculty to develop an “Evidence-Based Resource Center” that is housed in the adjunct faculty office. Invite all adjunct faculty to review and use these resources.

**Issue:**

Schools may not have enough classroom faculty and field instructors who are adequately trained to implement EBPs. Franklin (pp. 21-22) therefore recommends:

1. Schools may invest in the professional development of individual practice faculty that want to be trained in certain evidenced-based practices and construct teams between the faculty where this expertise can be shared between classes.
2. Faculty consultants may be hired that are currently trained in evidenced-based practices across departments or universities to mentor and train other faculty when the limits of licenses and certifications allows one to do so and then resource teams between the faculty may be constructed within their own school or across schools of social work that can support one another for further training and implementation of those practices with students and agencies.
3. Schools may hire community-based, adjunct faculty that have been trained in evidenced-based practices and construct a practitioner-faculty team for the purposes of teaching and training evidenced-based practices to students and other faculty.

4. Schools may hire national training groups and train their entire faculty on a particular evidenced-based practice. Current field instructors may also be included. As a result it might be possible for a social work faculty and field instructors to become the main trainers and experts in a community or state for a particular evidenced-based practice if schools put the right strategic planning into that approach. Schools and agencies could possibly cost share on this type of training if it met a community need.
5. Faculty may research and create their own evidenced-based practices and may operate professional training institutes or issue licenses and certifications for certain evidenced-based, practices. Under such circumstances it may become possible for their entire student body and faculty to be trained at a low cost.

Franklin also suggests keeping our aims modest and realistic, such as expecting each faculty member to invest in learning how to implement just one evidence-based practice.

### **Strategies to Advance EBP**

Don't blame either side in the debate over EBP.

Pressure CSWE and NASW to improve their standards re EBP.

Create a Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Teaching of EBP, perhaps coordinated through one of our professional organizations.

Provide continuing education courses that promote scientifically-supported practices and that include a course devoted specifically to the methods of EBP *per se*.

Knowledge-based strategies – be guided by theory of diffusion on innovation.

Team strategies aimed at multiple levels of agencies/organizations.

Need to overcome false dichotomies re designs and methods and to spread understanding “that all research designs are good for the types of scientific questions for which they are tailored.” (Soydan, p. 5)

Also need to “bring to light the falsity of the suggestion that evidence based research ignores the human context of social and mental health problems” (Soydan, p.5).

Need to spread understanding that the EBP hierarchy for causal inferences does not denigrate qualitative studies; with other types of EBP questions (non-causal) qualitative inquiry might be more appropriate than quantitative.

Social work needs to develop typologies to assess and classify its stock of intervention studies (such as well supported effective practice; supported - efficacious practice; promising practice; acceptable/emerging practice; fails to demonstrate effect; concerning practice).

The profession should foster the establishment of a cadre of EBP experts nationally (and ideally at least one faculty member per school) to track current research and pedagogical advances in EBP.

Proponents of EBP in social work would do well to avoid hyperbolic claims as to what EBP training will do for the profession and its clients. There are many serious impediments to widespread implementation of EBP pedagogical efforts in social work and it is likely that systemic issues will undermine these efforts for the foreseeable future. A feasible and justifiably modest early aim of EBP education in schools of social work nationally might be to discourage use of scientifically-unsupported interventions that are costly and/or associated with seriously adverse consequences (particularly in those cases where one or more low-cost, benign, and effective interventions are available).

### **Agency Barriers to EBP**

Organizational climate and culture.

Limited resources for engaging in EBP.

Limited resources for training in new interventions supported by the best evidence.

Need to recognize that RCTs have shortcomings. They usually have narrow eligibility requirements – such as excluding participants with co-morbidities – and thus may have limited generalizability to real world agency practice, especially for social workers, whose clients often have complex and multiple problems.

More clinical trials are needed that have broader eligibility criteria and that involve real world agency complexities.

“Finding the time to meet in EBP teams, even an hour or two once a week, was a challenging task. Once scheduled these EBP meetings were often interrupted by unforeseen and uncontrollable issues (e.g., client emergencies, staff turnover, monitoring visits). Practitioners in the project reported that EBP is simply not at

the top of the list of their more pressing agency driven priorities.....It is likely that students learning to be evidence-based practitioners will be similarly distracted. It is likely as well that they will experience a disconnect between the knowledge, skills and values they are taught in school and the typical agency environments in which field education is provided. Accordingly, in order for EBP training to meet the gold standard of field and agency learning, new forms of coordination between schools and agencies will be required.”

“Practitioners need a consumer reports of effective lists of evidenced-based practices to help them obtain the best information because most busy practitioners do not have time to critically analyze the practices appearing on the evidenced-base lists to see if they are what they claim to be, evidenced-base.” (Franklin, p.13)

Germane to resource limitations, Franklin (pp. 14-15) asserts:

“Knowing about an evidenced-based practice does not automatically translate into being able to do it well with a client or even having the confidence or special training credentials necessary for some evidence-based practices to be able to apply the practices. Neither does a having a treatment manual in hand mean a student or a practitioner will have the basic skills to apply the practices within that manual .....To be effective requires on-going relationships with those who know how to implement the evidenced-based practices and direct links with immediate help in learning how to apply the new innovations in practices, and this usually translates into some type of hands-on supervisory and consultation model. The supervisory and consultation model has to be on-site or directly linked to the student and the practitioner through a telephone, or Internet-based, technical assistant. The research has shown over and over again that if we take the supervision, consultation, and technical assistance away that the fidelity of the evidence-base practices decrease and the effect sizes also decrease for the effectiveness of the practice being applied.” (Franklin, pp. 14-15)

### **Agency Strategies**

Do not blame agencies or practitioners or suggest that their failure to use EBP is a simple matter of choice. This sort of accusation is not constructive nor is it accurate. Many agencies are simply overwhelmed and under-supported.

Participation of agency providers and directors who serve on curriculum advisory committees, including sub-committees for each concentration and specialization, and the Dean’s Professional Advisory Committee.

Show agencies how EBP-relevant research findings have value to them.

Formulate faculty research in response to agency information needs.

Teach agency *teams* (not individuals) the basics of EBP.

Include supervisors and upper level administrators in the team process.

Because staff turnover is a significant issue in many agencies careful consideration needs to be given to which agency staff are selected to participate in EBP training.

Use existing scheduled time for meetings or trainings for team EBP tasks; practitioners typically cannot find other times for it.

Using student interns to perform some of the tasks would be useful for promoting EBP in agency practice and protecting the time of frontline workers who may be able to contribute to the team through problem formulation or implementation.

The team approach enables practitioners to divide the EBP process tasks and thus make the process more feasible. The team approach also increases the likelihood that the EBP question will be of broad importance throughout the agency. Some team members may be better at identifying practice problems to target using empirical evidence while others may be more comfortable with or have more time to search the literature or evaluate and summarize empirical findings. One agency reported that they planned to have interns search for targeted research evidence to bring to their supervisory group who would in turn evaluate, synthesize, and incorporate the research.

**Issue:**

According to Franklin (pp. 16-17), the team “models are highly resourced with additional infrastructure that is sold as a part of training packages....these training, supervision and consultation models ....are too restrictive, cost prohibitive, and time-consuming [which] keeps some agencies from adopting [EBPs].”

Therefore, schools of social work need to provide the infrastructure, training and support to the agency, but when they leave, the agency cannot sustain the the EBPs.

Also according to Franklin (p. 18), “Developing a school- agency-partnership takes a considerable amount of faculty time and resources. ....it is perhaps impractical for schools of social work of all sizes and localities to provide the needed infrastructure. It is also not feasible for every school to support school-agency partnerships with resources to the extent that Mullen and colleagues described

providing in their research project, for example. I also believe it would be impractical to sustain evidenced-based agency training through school of social work funds. This would require an extraordinarily enriched funding source for field programs and training, for example. Alternatively, schools may have to pursue creative alliances and external funding opportunities to sustain one or two agency partnerships for the purposes of developing the type of didactic-supervisory alliances.”

Instead of training to find and appraise systematic reviews and individual studies, social workers in agency based practice settings feel that easily accessible practitioner-friendly synopses of research evidence related to practice relevant questions would be more useful. (But is this too authority based? What about biased reviews?)

Transparency about the limitations of EBP they are likely to face is just as important to communicate as the potential it holds. Just as students will be frustrated by skills they learn and cannot apply, so too will practitioners and other agency stakeholders. Also acknowledge their frustrations and alternative viewpoints re EBP.

Provide evidence-based continuing education opportunities for their graduates as well as other practitioners in their communities.

Organize or utilize clients rights organizations to demand more accountability by agencies re the evidence-base for what they do.

Develop alliances with government agencies to induce change in agency (and educational) practices re EBP.

“When impacted by exogenous sources of change, schools of social work and social work agencies will have to adopt evidence-based practice in order to increase their legitimacy and survival capability.” (Soydan, p. 14)

## **EBP as a Framework for Broad-based Reform in Social Work Education**

Problem-based learning (PBL) should be a guiding principle in curriculum reforms and should replace traditional teaching-learning formats. PBL is case-based and interactive, with an emphasis on decision-making. In PBL students are placed in “small groups of five or seven, together with a tutor trained in group process as well as skills involved in evidence-informed practice such as posing well-structured questions and searching effectively and efficiently for related literature.”

Advanced standing should be abandoned; it restricts the ability to add advanced and specialty content to MSW-level education. EBP principles should be used to create a two-year curriculum that avoids duplication of course content in the undergraduate and MSW foundation.

We need to raise standards re admission to and graduation from MSW programs.

A grant should be pursued to appraise the quality of education and graduates in a random sample of BSW and MSW programs.

**Issues:**

Comparative studies are needed to provide evidence as to the impact of these recommendations on what and how well students learn.

In attempting to accomplish ambitious broad-based reform – such as improving admission and graduation standards, abolishing advance-standing, and replacing traditional formats with PBL – will we aim too high and consequently not achieve more reachable aims regarding improving the teaching of EBP?