

## Introduction to “Resources for Building Curriculum Language”

This document is intended to help faculty in a range of programs to identify language useful for course objectives, learning modules, and research proposals for building knowledge in community organization and social administration. The Association of Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA) began work to identify macro practice knowledge and skills in 1997. That work concluded in the development of “Resources for Building Curriculum Language for Macro Practice based on MSW/ACOSA Competencies”. There is considerable overlap between the 50 items identified in “Resources for Building Curriculum Language” and the CSWE 2008 EPAS competencies. For example, it incorporates all the competencies identified in EPAS 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.8, and 2.1.10, and parts of others. However, “Resources” is framed using macro processes identified in the *Journal of Community Practice*, and is focused on social work with communities; organizations; social and economic planning groups; and, policy practice and advocacy organizations.

As part of their 1997 strategic planning efforts, members of ACOSA began work to develop advanced level macro practice knowledge and skills. It was assumed that the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) provides guidelines for the foundation curriculum. However, in order to help schools of social work with curricula relating to community organization, policy practice, administration and management, social planning, community development, and organizational leadership it was important to identify competencies for these advanced areas. The ACOSA leadership took as its guiding framework for this work the community practice processes identified as themes in the ACOSA sponsored journal, *The Journal of Community Practice*. These process themes in the early stages of the work were *organizing, planning, development, and change*. By 2005 members working on the macro competencies had modified the process themes to be *organizing, planning, collaboration, sustainable development and progressive change*. The knowledge items that formed the basis for the competencies had grown to 50 items (Weil, M., Gamble, D. N., and MacGuire, E., 2010).

The faculty and staff working on the revision of the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards for CSWE were working in a parallel activity. Their work culminating in EPAS 2008 identified ten core competencies with “measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills” (EPAS 2008, Educational Policy 2.1).

ACOSA leader Tracy Soska, working with the faculty, alumni, and the practice community in the Pittsburg area, developed a set of macro competencies framed by the ten competencies outlined in CSWE’s EPAS 2008. Soska and his colleagues did this work in preparation for the reaffirmation of the educational program at the University of Pittsburg School of Social Work. That work is represented in the table identified as “MSW/ACOSA - EPAS Matrix for Core Macro Practice Competencies”. Both the “Resources for Building Curriculum Language” and the “MSW/ACOSA - EPAS Matrix” were shared with the ACOSA membership on-line and at the Portland, Oregon, Annual Program Meeting on October 15, 2010. They were also sent to CSWE personnel with a request for suggestions and comments. Both documents reflect changes suggested by the ACOSA membership, macro practice teaching faculty, and CSWE in these exchanges (Gamble, 2010; Gamble & Soska, 2013).

Understanding that these two tables have different frames, and complementary but different uses, both sets of macro competencies were adopted by the ACOSA Board of Directors in January 11, 2011. They have been published in the *Journal of Community Practice* and in the *Encyclopedia of Social Work On-line*.

Gamble, D. N. (2011), Advanced concentration macro competencies for social work practitioners: Identifying knowledge, values, judgment and skills to promote human well-being. *Journal of Community Practice*, 19(4), pp.369-402).

Gamble, D. N. & Soska, T. M. (2013). Macro practice competencies. *Encyclopedia of Social Work Online*, DOI: 10.1093/acrefmrw/9780199975839.013.976

Weil, M., Gamble, D. N., & MacGuire, E., (2010), *Community Practice Skills Workbook: Local to Global Perspectives*, (pp. 110-118). New York: Columbia University Press.