

## **DEMAND ANALYSIS TO ACCOMPANY NOTICE OF INTENT FOR NEW OR EXTENDED DEGREES**

The information from this form will be used:

- In summary form in the Notice of Intent
- In the Financial Analysis spreadsheet
- In the New Degree Proposal form
- In the submission for accreditation to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities after approval by the Board of Regents

**Using the information you developed in the Demand Analysis Workbook, please complete the form below and submit with your Notice of Intent. You do not need to submit the Workbook itself.**

<b>Proposed Degree</b>	<b>Bachelors of Arts in Social Work</b>	<b>Location:</b>	<b>Tri-Cities Campus</b>
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### **1. Employer Demand**

If you are extending a degree, or have a related existing degree, briefly summarize the employment outcomes for your graduates.

What is the state and regional employment demand for this degree?

Is long-term employer demand expected to grow, remain stable, or decline?

What is your evidence?

<b>Answer here:</b>
<p>The job outlook for social work graduates is strong. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Overall employment of social workers is projected to grow 7 percent from 2022 to 2032, faster than the average for all occupations. About 63,800 openings for social workers are projected each year, on average, over the decade. Many of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire.”</p> <p>Additionally, Washington State has a larger shortage of social workers and behavioral health workers than the U.S. average. Due to these shortages, the State Legislature, private foundations, and State Universities have created the Washington State Behavioral Health Workforce initiative to fill the gap. This program is funded by legislative funding allocated to fill this gap. Additionally, the shortages of social workers are even more pronounced in rural Washington counties. Washington social workers disproportionately work within urban counties leading to the greatest shortages in rural Washington (Washington Behavioral Health Workforce Initiative, 2022). Additionally, there is a projected</p>

1.7% annual growth rate for Washington BSW level social workers (BLS, 2023).

## 2. Competitors

Who are your competitors? What is their competitive advantage? Are competitor-institutions planning to introduce similar programs/expand existing ones? Why is your department/school able to provide the proposed new degree better than other WSU departments/schools or other universities?

### Answer here:

Currently Washingtonians may pursue BSW education at 7 colleges or universities; University of Washington, Seattle University, Pacific Lutheran University, Saint Martin's University, Walla Walla University, Heritage University, and Eastern Washington University. The only programs that offer a BSW in Southeast Washington near the Tri-Cities where this program will be located are Walla Walla University, Heritage University, and Eastern Washington University. As a private Christian University, Walla Walla is not direct competition for the WSU Tri-Cities BSW. First, they are more expensive than WSU. Additionally, they fill a different niche by providing a faith-based program.

The Heritage program is a more direct competitor for the BSW at WSU Tri-Cities. Heritage currently graduates roughly 47 BSWs a year and has recently opened a campus in the Tri-Cities. Additionally, their tuition costs are similar to WSU Tri-Cities. Students may prefer Heritage for their smaller class sizes, readily available financial aid, and diverse student body. Similarly, WSU Tri-Cities has similar financial aid support and a similarly diverse student body. However, WSU may be preferred by students who are looking for a degree from a large state university that offers more community resources and a large network of alumni.

The only state university option that is available outside of the I-5 corridor, is EWU. EWU graduates roughly 50 BSWs a year (54 in 2023). This small number of graduates is not enough to fill the social service needs of Spokane and Cheney, let alone the Tri-Cities and the rest of Southeast Washington. Our program administration has met with the administration of EWU to discuss how the two programs will work together to attempt to meet the social work workforce needs of the region. EWU has slightly cheaper tuition and fees than WSU Tri-Cities. However, WSU Tri-Cities students with GPAs between 3.0-4.0

Revised: 08/28/17

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will receive between \$2000-4000 in scholarships a year which will bring the cost of the program down to lower than EWU.

The BSW's strongest competitor within the WSU system is the Human Development program. The Human Development program is not offered on the Tri-Cities campus (currently at Vancouver, Pullman, and Global Campus). HD curriculum has substantial crossover with social work curriculum. Therefore, it was chosen to pursue the development of the BSW at a campus where HD is not currently offered. The BSW has some advantages over the HD degree, specifically, the pathway to the completion of an advanced standing MSW degree with one year of additional coursework. This is a requirement mandated by the Council on Social Work Education, specific to social work programs. HD has advantages that include the pathway to a multitude of specialized certificates that include early childhood education, gerontology, adolescence, family studies, human service case management administration, and a teaching certificate in family and consumer sciences. It is not expected that these degrees will compete with one another directly due to being offered on different campuses.

### 3. Student Demand

Describe the target market in light of regional population trends, especially in the target age group.

What is the current number of students in existing programs in the proposed market area in this field? What is the potential number of students forecasted?

What are the key characteristics of the market segment you seek? How will your degree serve their needs?

#### **Answer here:**

We plan to begin our program with a focus of preparing 50 BSW graduates a year in line with our agreement with the Washington State Legislature's funding package. This will mean that we will have 50 admitted Juniors and 50 admitted Seniors a year. Based on Bureau of Labor Statistics job growth projections and Washington State Behavioral Health Workforce Initiative reported shortages, we anticipate that the demand will exceed our initial capacity. Our target market is comprised of two groups; 1). Students who would like to pursue the BSW as an entry point into social service work in Southeast Washington; & 2). Students who plan to seek an MSW will utilize the BSW to qualify for advanced standing in graduate programs.

In this market, Heritage University currently graduates roughly 47 students a year. It is forecasted that the current market for BSW education in the Tri-Cities and Southeast Washington far exceeds that capacity of both Heritage University

and WSU Tri-Cities.

**Expected FTE**

<b>Year 1</b>	40	<b>Year 2</b>	50	<b>Year 3</b>	50
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How did you arrive at these numbers? How do they compare with your current enrollments in an existing degree or option, or related degree?

**Answer here:**

We expect that our first class could be a little below our initial capacity due to initial recruitment efforts. However, due to a high level of inquiries from current students, community social service partners, and Columbia Basin College, we expect that we will quickly have greater interest than our capacity. It is our expectation that we will be attempting to hire additional faculty so that we can maintain our required 25:1 student/teacher ration that is required for accreditation. Once this occurs, we will be able to expand our cohort size.

**4. Recruitment Plan**

How and where are students going to find out about this program? Who will represent this department in its promotion activities? What specific venues can you use to promote an awareness of this new program? What means will be used to access and educate businesses, industry, agencies, and/or institutions about this offering?

**Answer here:**

Recruitment to our program is going to come from a variety of sources that include outreach to advisors in WSU's Health Professions Student Center, our College of Nursing, our academic advising team, Columbia Basin College, and local social service and healthcare organizations; Benton Franklin Recovery Coalition, Kadlec Regional Medical Center, Lourdes Health, and the Benton County Behavioral Health Advisory Committee. We are also in the process of doing outreach to social work professional organizations and licensing bodies that include the Washington Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, The Washington Association of School Social Workers, and the Washington State Department of Health. We are also working to enter pre-accreditation with the Council on Social Work Education which will list us on

their list of programs, which may provide another entry point for potential students to discover our program.