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DANE-CLINTON, ELIZABETH

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN FOR A POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM IN SOCIAL
WORK ADMINISTRATION

City University of New York

D.S.W. 1981

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**PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN FOR A POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM
IN SOCIAL WORK ADMINISTRATION**

by

Elizabeth Dane-Clinton

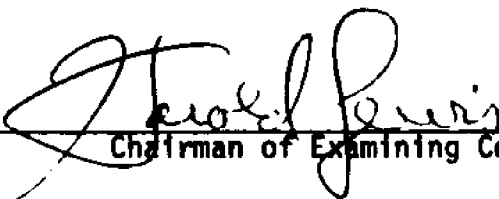
**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in Social Work in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Social Welfare
The City University of New York**

1981

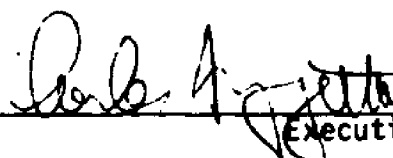
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1981

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Social Work in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Social Welfare.

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The City University of New York

1981

This work is dedicated to the memory of my mother

GRACE SENDERS DANE

who, despite waning strength, never lost interest
in the progress of this endeavor nor faith that
it would be completed.

ABSTRACT

A model for a continuing education program in administration for social workers was guided by a series of principles for design emanating from an exploratory field study of the attitudes and perceptions of social workers in middle management positions in social work agencies. The program was successful in drawing an initial student enrollment sufficient to secure program continuity, despite historical evidence of lack of interest in this area of continuing education in the greater New York area. The success of the program was attributed to a program design stressing congruence with a social work professional value system and recognition of the stresses of transition from direct service practitioner to management roles.

The planning methodology focused on the identification of personal, professional and organizational obstacles to participation. The program design integrated theoretical perspectives on professional socialization, organizational exchange and adult learning in an exploratory approach toward the implementation of the new program. The profile of enrolled students provided an indication that the success of the program was in part due to the fact that it was providing a new linkage in support and legitimacy for social workers in movement along a career path from casework to administration and program management.

New patterns and routes for dialogue for educational planning are necessary at the middle levels of management to forge and maintain the link between the academic resources of the profession and the needs of practitioners in order to increase competence in administrative areas to support the delivery of social work services.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This report documents the development of a model for a continuing education program in social work administration. The overall project goal was the creation of an educational design which would be responsive to the needs of social workers interested in developing competence in administration. The lack of specific educational models in this area provided the impetus for a focus on the design aspects of the program. The main objective of the project was the development of a series of principles of design to provide direction for a program model.

The demand among social workers for continuing education in administration and management has not been strong, despite the apparent need. The principles of design were selected with a dual emphasis relating to program integrity and program survival. The first goal was to reinforce a structural coherence among program components which would encourage a positive identification between social workers in the field and the program. The second goal was to overcome personal, professional and organizational obstacles to participation in the program. The identification of potential obstacles was a major part of the planning process and is discussed in considerable detail in Chapters II, III and IV.

The challenge of continuing education program design lies in

the exploration and expansion of the relation between the variables of formal learning, requirements of the job and the individual career path. A balance must be achieved which is responsive to both the issues of daily administrative practice and the establishment of a conceptual framework for ongoing acquisition of knowledge and skills.¹

Some goals for postgraduate education are similar to those at the master's level. The development of principles for program design served to highlight some important differences. The nature of the target group and the constraints of continuing education as a learning framework, posed the major challenges in design and implementation.²

In the past, the learning expectations and needs of the working professional have borne little relation to what has been taught in continuing education courses.³

The changing social and economic structure of our society, technological changes, expanding definitions of poverty, have produced pressures which have dramatically altered the structure and functioning of our institutions designed for social intervention. As financial support and guidelines determining social need have shifted increasingly to the public arena, social welfare services have moved into active competition with other publicly-supported sectors of the economy. As resources have become scarcer, demands for accountability have risen, bringing a new visibility coupled with expectations of performance on the part of administrators in social welfare fields.

Within the social services delivery system even the smallest agency must conform to standards of practice and procedures guided by licensure, governmental monitoring, peer review and consumer group surveillance. In itself, the efficient internal functioning of a social

agency is no measure of effectiveness of services to clients. Invariably, however, poor program administration and inefficient internal operations create an unnecessary drain on resources which in turn jeopardizes the breadth and continuity of services to those in need. Decreased public tolerance for loose management of limited resources makes program closure a certainty despite a potential for positive social intervention.

The intrusion of public expectations in the social welfare arena has forced changes which the social work field has had difficulty in accepting, and incorporating into the professional educational process. The demand for social agency personnel with a competence in administrative and management areas has grown significantly within recent years, and it is expected to continue.⁴ Despite the demand, the resources to educate and train social workers for these roles remain fairly limited.

The social worker who moves beyond the supervision of direct services to overall program responsibilities meets a mounting pressure to model agency organization and functioning on that of a business endeavor. This trend toward incorporating management ideology into the human services field often brings a confrontation of conflicting values and goals. The resolution of the resulting strains requires greater knowledge and skill on the part of the social work administrator than graduate school training or traditional movement through agency ranks usually brings.

Until fairly recently, mobility within the social work field has not meant competing with members of other professions. A tighter job market and the interdependence of all service systems in an

increasingly complex social structure, have contributed to the blurring of traditional professional boundaries. Nowhere is this more evident than in the field of social welfare. Some professional groups, by accident of time and place, have emerged as more versatile in administrative areas than others, and have been able to move laterally across different occupational and service fields into key policy and program areas.

New social agency administrators, particularly in the public sector, are as likely to have a background in business management, administration or law, as they are to have had training in social work.⁵

If social workers are to maintain professional flexibility and continue to have influence in social welfare policy and program implementation, they must strengthen their administrative and management skills. A conceptual understanding of the objectives of social service delivery, experience in the field, and commitment to social work values, give the social worker a unique contribution to administrative decision-making in social welfare programs. There is a need to explore new learning paths at all levels to encourage social workers who are interested in developing administrative competence to do so, and to provide opportunities for those already in the field to expand their scope of activity. A forum for the examination of aptitudes, values, discipline and style in administrative practice must be cultivated. The setting must be one where social workers can bring prior experience, new skills and new knowledge to bear on the requirements of administrative demands.

The questions of the availability of resources to provide the structure for such a forum, and the degree of interest among social

work practitioners, are among the issues that are considered in this report.

Existing formal social work educational resources for administrative training fall into the categories of master's, post-master's continuing education, and doctoral programs. For the individual ready to make a full-time commitment to academic study, doctoral programs usually include study of administrative and organizational issues from a theoretical perspective. The emphasis on application has traditionally favored preparation for the teaching or research careers of the students.

At the master's degree level, a number of schools have recently expanded their mandate to include exposing the students to both theoretical and pragmatic aspects of administration in a social agency.⁶ For the student, such an emphasis may appear to be an exercise aimed toward a distant future, far removed from expectations of new job requirements. It has been demonstrated that even when administration majors were offered within schools of social work, the majority of students chose therapeutic concentrations.⁷ One could speculate that the student of social work is usually drawn to the field through a concern for helping people and a desire to do so directly. Within the academic setting, the clinical areas may seem to have the more coherent body of knowledge, the more tangible skills, and the closest links to the operationalized values of the profession. The life stage at which an individual enters a master's program would also tend to reinforce an interest in clinical concentrations. The concerns of the young adult in the twenties and early thirties have traditionally been establishing independence from the family, interpersonal relations, and

starting a family. The work which has been done in the area of motivation for adult learning choices would reinforce student course selections which are related to pressures of their current developmental phases and social role expectations.⁸

It may be that the majority of students at the master's level are not ready to conceptualize the impact of the organizational setting on their work and future careers. A recent national study of the movement of social workers into administrative positions documented that less than five percent of all social work graduate students were enrolled in administration majors. Upon joining the work force, 50 percent of all graduates moved into administrative positions within five years of receiving their degree.⁹

Emphasis on the learning needs of the graduate social worker has been limited until recently. Conferences and workshops have traditionally provided the medium for highlighting trends and presenting new models of practice. Very few schools of social work had organized continuing education programs earlier than the 1970s.¹⁰ Current continuing education programs sponsored by schools of social work that focus on administrative areas, are scattered both in emphasis and geography.¹¹ While some new programs have emerged,¹² courses and workshops that isolate specific skills such as grant writing, budget design, or staff development, continue to be the usual pattern of offerings in administrative areas.

With the rise of interest in management in the human services, other training approaches have received increasing use. Individual or groups of agencies have shown a readiness to identify the gaps in the performance of their social work management personnel and seek

contractual arrangements with educational institutions or consultant firms for special training. The focus is often on specific techniques and tasks in response to agency needs rather than on the development of a more generic administrative or management competence within an individual.

Outside the field of social work there are a number of other avenues through which social workers can pursue appropriate knowledge and skills. There are choices in such areas as accounting, personnel management, business management, public administration, as well as various leadership and personal growth institutes and seminars. Participants in courses based in other professions are usually expected to make the new material applicable to their own sphere of interest alone. Issues and dilemmas germane to the human services field may not emerge for discussion, and if they do there may be no common contextual base for useful dialogue. While this may pose a challenge for some, for many others it poses only problems.

Similar difficulties are encountered by the social workers who enter formal degree programs in other professional areas with the intent of practicing within the field of social work. While this group is small, there has been vocal resentment of the feeling of being driven outside the profession by the lack of sufficient educational opportunities within. The need for formal training for social workers in administrative positions has been identified, and pressure for change exerted by those both in and outside the profession. However, those who actively search out opportunities to develop formal administrative competence are few compared to the numbers of social workers involved in administrative work.

The administrative areas of expertise to which social workers must have access include: theories of organizational development and change, interprofessional relationships with fiscal, legal and planning bodies, communication and information feedback systems, governmental relations, policy implementation and monitoring. Programs of continuing education offered by schools of social work generally concentrate on those areas in which the planners have been assured of interest and adequate enrollment. Isolated risks in design and content may be taken, but program continuity requires institutional support and ongoing student commitment. In this situation the lack of existing resources allows no focus for a demonstration of interest. This may dampen and frustrate incipient demand, which in turn would curtail the development of new programs. Thus a cycle is continued in which the field of social work denies the importance of formal opportunities for its members to acquire competitive competence in administration, not by an active stance but through omission.

It was anticipated at the outset of the project that there was a higher level of interest in the community of social workers than had been tapped by available programs. It was hoped that the interest would coalesce around the new program and stimulate participation through increased visibility.

The Project Design

The project was exploratory in nature. The process of design encompassed the development of a conceptual framework drawing on learning theory, principles of andragogy, organizational theory, and

sociological perspectives on professionalism, role and reference group influences. A guiding theoretical stance for the program was drawn from a principle of adult learning linking energy for learning to the drive for mastery over an environmental situation.¹³ If the task of meeting life challenges at different developmental stages directs adult learning choices, then the nadir of interest in learning about administration would occur at the point where a move into an administrative role brings a reorientation toward function and new expectations of performance.

As part of the design process a survey of social workers in administration was conducted through a series of structured interviews. The objective was to identify personal, professional or organizational issues relating to the decision to participate in a formal educational program in administration. The results of this inquiry combined with the theoretical framework served as the organizing structure for the development of principles of program design. The design issues of establishing program legitimacy, internal and external program relationships, continuity and articulation of learning phases, timing, size, limits and evaluation were covered in both the theoretical discussion and the survey.

Although the project did not make inquiry into the question of attitudes toward earlier educational experiences, this issue was not altogether neglected. There was an assumption that educational experiences of the past had often left a negative residue.¹⁴ The course design assured linkages between the program and work-related challenges. The stress on adult learning styles, integration of work and new skills, presupposed a mature approach to a learning process on the part of

potential students.

Education for social work, as with many other professions, does not lay a groundwork for the ongoing education of its practitioners upon finishing the degree program.¹⁵ Selection of a profession, and participation in the socialization process that exists in graduate education provides both formal and informal opportunities for the creation of a positive climate for the concept of continuing learning as a responsibility of the professional worker. The recognition and acceptance that expectations will shift over time, as job performance and career direction evolves, must be built into the educational process. This thrust toward providing anticipatory socialization¹⁶ for future roles that may include administrative competencies is important. It would help to prepare the student for career choices to be encountered within the first few years of practice and to instill the notion that responsibility for professional growth does not end with the master's degree credential.

The dominant influence providing ongoing socialization for the professional social worker may well be the organizational setting where daily work takes place. While a lack of awareness of need for further training can stem from the graduate education process, it may also be negatively reinforced within the social agency. Insufficient or narrow supervision, poor communication between staff levels, or lack of leadership to highlight organizational or systemic issues, may contribute to a lack of understanding or interest in administrative components to service delivery.

A common problem for social workers already in middle-management positions is both a professional isolation within their agency and

isolation from similarly placed peers in other agencies. Both situations inhibit exposure to new ideas and the use of role models for incentives to action.

The avoidance of options to learn and assume administrative responsibility can have many more complex aspects, relating to the characteristics of the professions, its membership, and larger societally-based, sex and role expectations. Recent membership surveys have revealed that twice as many men as women hold administrative positions in the field although women comprise two-thirds of the membership of the profession.¹⁷ The professional status of the women surveyed varied according to their family and marital status, but their salaries did not. Across the board, salaries were significantly lower for women in administrative positions than they were for men in similar positions.¹⁸ While interrupted career plans and conflicting responsibilities play a role in salary differentials, ingrained attitudes among women themselves regarding the assumption of leadership positions, and bias in promotion patterns, also play a role. It may be inferred that some combination of these factors are operating when women consider investing in their future through a commitment to additional education and training. Avoiding risk, competition, and the stress of conflicting role demands may motivate some women not to seek out further education in administrative areas.¹⁹ For others who may be grappling in a different manner with institutional constraints and societal stereotypes, the route of formal education in administration could provide a structured and somewhat protected environment. Exploration and testing new knowledge and skills can take place before entering the competitive job market either in their own agency or in the broader service arena.

Within the profession there are at least four groups within which a demand for resources might be stimulated; those planning to move into administrative areas, those already in middle management positions interested in improving their present functioning, those who are considering a move to a higher level of administration, and those exploring a new career path. Given the history of the lack of social worker interest in continuing education programs in administration, a program had to be designed which would encompass a range of interests, skill and experience levels and attitudes about social work administration. Limits had to be set, however there would be no way of knowing which subgroups would be attracted to the program when it came to the point of commitment to participate.

The focus of the project was on the development of a specific planning process based on a series of organizing principles of design. The project evaluation spanned the period of initial impact of the program's presentation through its brochure, and pre-first class communications. A survey was conducted of those who enrolled in the first series of courses. The survey sought to identify selected characteristics of the members of the target population who were attracted to the program; the program design elements which were influential in their decision to participate; and the relationship of the principles guiding the design to the program aspects which encouraged participation or interest in the program.

The results of the project evaluation must eventually become part of the overall evaluation of the program effectiveness. This remains an ongoing objective of the writer and will be carried out through work with the program during later stages.

Effective delivery of social services to people depends on a successful combination of a diversity of elements, among them the availability of appropriate resources, skilled direct service practitioners, and competent administrative personnel who share the value system, goals and objectives of the social work profession.

The scarcity of continuing education program models in social work administration to stimulate movement toward the development of increasing numbers of competent social work administrators prompted the choice of a project direction. While the project focus is on the initial impact of the program in encouraging more social workers to commit themselves to participate in a formal learning process, this represents only a first step toward the overall program goal.

Footnotes

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²Malcolm S. Knowles, "Innovations in Teaching Styles and Approaches Based Upon Adult Learning," Journal of Education for Social Work (Spring 1972); Beulah Rothman, "Perspectives on Learning and Teaching in Continuing Education," Journal of Education for Social Work, 9: 2 (Spring 1973); Lois G. Swack, "The Unique Aspects of Short-Term Teaching: How to Teach the How To's to the Doers," Journal of Education for Social Work, 10: 1 (Winter 1974).

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⁸Knowles, op. cit., p. 35.

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¹¹Arnold Lauffer, The Practice of Continuing Education in the Human Services (New York: McGraw Hill, 1977), p. 32.

¹²Council on Social Work Education, "Continuing Education Programs in Social Work, Summer 1977" (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1977).

Partial listing of organized programs in continuing education in social work administration as of 1978: Case Western Reserve;

University of Michigan; University of Southern California; University of Texas at Austin; University of Washington; and Wayne State University.

¹³Knowles, op. cit., p. 35; and R. J. Havighurst and Betty Orr, "Adult Education and Adult Needs" (Boston: Boston Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1956), p. 1; Jerome Bruner, Toward a Theory of Instruction (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1968).

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¹⁸David Fanshel, "Status Differentials: Men and Women in Social Work," Social Work, 21: 6 (November 1976), p. 451.

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CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL WORKERS' INTEREST IN EXPANDING ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES

In this chapter we have looked at the environmental context within which social workers make decisions about their ongoing education. Trends in the workplace and the profession are examined in order to explore linkages between individual decisions and the creation of systems of access. There is an attempt to move beyond the target group to the broader political and social situation at a point in time.¹

A further objective of this chapter was to examine the target population from a sociological perspective. Professional socialization processes, reference groups, and role expectations as they related to social workers pursuing careers in administration were explored.

Organizations have always needed people who facilitate the actual work of the organization. They act as conduits and interpolators from one level to the next. They channel decisions and create structures for implementation of policy. It is at the middle management levels where it is determined what the thrust of policy directives will look like and whether they will be captured in action or not. A theory of middle management is needed to cope with the dimensions of form and structure of this area of organizational life which absorbs the energy and talents of so many professional social workers. Becker and Strauss have observed that each kind of work has its own patterns of tensions

and problems, and that the pattern changes according to position within an organization. They noted that social work organizations promoted an unusual break in the career movement of professional workers. They identified this break as occurring at the point when the individual shifted from a primary concern with the supervision of personnel actually performing the service work of the organization to clear administrative responsibility focused on the organization's needs.² The change to a primary concern with the internal functioning and the survival of the organization can lead the worker to changes in self image, identification, and a questioning of professional mission. The demands of the organization in terms of new priorities related to agency maintenance, changing peer relationships and alliances may cause disruption for social workers who move into middle management positions. The conflicting energies that maintain and support a functioning system are highlighted in the tensions between line and staff workers. The professional who moves into a staff position from direct service or supervision may find that indicators of progress and results have differing benchmarks. Satisfactions and rewards do not always coincide with those anticipated, based on professional socialization and training. The dynamic interplay among workers functioning in different roles within agency structure is explored by organizational theorists, notably, Gouldner,³ Perrow,⁴ and Simon.⁵ An understanding of the stresses of middle management roles for the professional social worker was expected to assist in both the design of the program and its presentation.

Sociological theory as it provided a perspective on the importance of reference groups led to the propositional formulation that

isolation from the professional reference group, as represented by the clinical worker, may bring an increase in tension and feelings of isolation to social workers who have newly assumed management responsibilities. The loss of informal relationships with peers, the opportunities for informal consultation and feedback, heighten tension and may tend to constrict creative responses to problem situations. Conversely the creation of a new reference group within the profession of social work would provide support by lessening the sense of professional isolation and encouraging a dialogue among peers. This should promote a decrease in tension related to job performance at middle managerial levels.

Other stresses of middle management in social work, although probably not unique to social work, relate to the instability and movement of those in middle management positions. Social workers in these positions may not envision themselves remaining at the middle level for long, their goals may be to direct a program or to develop a private practice. Each of these options implies the desire to escape the "two-way role of the middle manager"⁶ and the need to relate to those above and below within the organization.⁷ Informal discussions with social workers in middle management positions have revealed concerns related to isolation in terms of a competitive ranking of skills, and the lack of a frame of reference regarding general expectations of performance at their level, beyond their own organizations. A sense of competitive insecurity was evident in these early discussions, magnified by diminishing financial resources in the social welfare arena.

A question arises as to whether such competitiveness would inhibit the development of a peer reference group with the potential

of support functions.

A recruitment process for a post-master's program must identify characteristics of participation in middle level social administration in such a way that joining a peer group for an educational process carries the promise of enhancing professional identity, broadening functional skills and offering support for common needs and interests.

Changes within the economic and political structure of our society have contributed to the growth of middle management as a work area for large numbers of people, both from the traditional professions and the newer schools of management and administration. Within the social welfare field the public sector is dominated by superagencies which have added new echalons of management levels to cope with the additional organizational maintenance functions which come with increased size. The economic situation has also contributed to changes in the voluntary sector, among them, agency annexations and mergers, and more complex relationships with the public sector. Federal, state and city government funding have become a part of virtually all voluntary agency operating budgets, stimulating multiple administrative demands for all levels of agency operation.⁸ Legislated requirements for auditing, monitoring and evaluation have accentuated the development of new internal structures.

In sum the general complexity and interdependency among all of society's social welfare institutions requires more staff to deal with such areas as interagency relations, fundraising, and coordination. The agency organizational chart graphically shows the change with its new characteristic bulge in the middle. Despite these changes which have radically altered the work situation for the social work profession,

social workers have not been clamouring for further formal education in administration or management. The planner did not take it for granted that the sudden availability of a new program in this area would in and of itself stimulate a sustained demand.

Historical Background

The attitudes and biases of today's social workers toward administration may be traced from the formative years of the profession. In the early years of this century there was a growth of interest in defining the nature of social work. Mary Richmond identified social casework as "an administrative process which does different things for and with different people."⁹ While this may seem an unusual stress given the direction of the future growth of the profession, it was a careful observation which provided the clues to the future development of the profession. Lewis has observed that, "Having evolved in social agency programs, social work carried the genetic imprint of bureaucracy into its intellectual and emotional development."¹⁰ He goes on to examine the dehumanizing effect that the bureaucratic structure of service delivery imposed, and the consequent educational efforts to counteract this tendency. Lubove notes that, "A . . . persistent conflict arose from administrative pressures favoring procedure, routine and organizational loyalty, as opposed to the profession's stress upon creative skill and service as absolute values."¹¹ However casework predominated, representing the most active subgroup within the growing profession, and gave major direction to most schools of social work. Lubove elaborates on the process whereby through narrowing the

base of social work concerns, and neglecting broad areas of social reform, planning and agency management, casework became "the nuclear skill in social work," and in all but a few situations provided the image of the profession to the lay world.¹² This in turn contributed to a filtered self-selection process of those entering the field. Throughout this period there were voices advocating the need for a broader professional education, most notably those of Edith Abbott and Sophonisba Breckenridge in Chicago during the early 1920s.¹³ The voices continued in the 1930s expressing concern about the emphasis on training specialists in casework and not enough attention being paid to " . . . the most important task they should be engaged in, namely, the education of the leaders, the organizers, the administrators--in short the executives of social work administration."¹⁴ Although social work administration was identified as one of the eight fields for inclusion in a social work curriculum in 1942 by the accrediting body, the American Association of Schools of Social Work, with the growth of the generic graduate social work program adopted in 1952 by the American Association's successor, the Council on Social Work Education, it was lost as a field.¹⁵

Interest in social administration as reflected in the journals of the social work profession has fluctuated, often in response to surrounding political and social conditions. A recent effort to classify articles in the Social Service Review during the period from 1927 through 1975 revealed that social welfare administration was of major concern during the depression period of 1927-1931, coinciding with an expansion of services. The fewest articles were recorded during 1957 through 1961 coinciding with what is referred to as the "era of

professionalization."¹⁶

Despite the identification of casework as the professional core of social work, there are some writers who from a sociological perspective assert that social work has not achieved the full professional status which it has sought so assiduously. Toren has been a primary contributor to the viewpoint that social work remains a semi-profession due to:

- a. The undeveloped theoretical knowledge base of social work practice relative to that of full-fledged professions.
- b. The relative low professional autonomy and authority of social workers within the organizations in which social work is carried out.¹⁷

It might be conjectured that the fragility of social work's professional status has contributed to a reluctance in the past to include administration as an option within the social work educational arena. Fear that its inclusion would serve as a dilutant or threat to the image of the social worker might be an underlying concern.

More recently, the social and economic incentives of the mid-1960s focused on community organization and participatory activities which challenged existing bureaucracies. A legacy of this period was an increased distrust of bureaucracy as the instrument of power reflecting middle class interests to the detriment of the poor. Bureaucracies were seen as stultified by routine and their self-serving, survival orientation.¹⁸ The tensions produced by the issues of service delivery, equity and organizational survival, while always there, were highlighted. The negative view of the role of bureaucratic organizations and the cynicism remained, particularly among social workers beginning their

professional careers during that period. Since the late 1960s services have been constrained by scarce resources. Survival has indeed become a dominant concern in organizational life.

The withdrawal of faith and financial support for social welfare programs coincided, not surprisingly, with a renewed interest in the administration and management of social agencies. In 1967, the National Association of Social Workers recognized the integral role of social work administration in the carrying out of social welfare policies and programmatic services.¹⁹ Throughout the 1970s there has been a slow reorientation of the profession toward issues of administration and management of social service organizations, and readying workers for new roles. Signs of change may be seen in the emergence of two new periodicals dealing with administrative issues in social work within the last two years.²⁰ A Committee on Administration has been formed within the New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. The schools of social work are putting more stress on administration at the graduate and postgraduate levels. This renewed focus on administrative competence may represent a situation where new functions and new work to be done will precipitate the expansion of a strata of professional social work managers. The growth of postgraduate programs for social workers in administration while not large may be an indication that we are in the midst of defining and redefining a distinct subgroup within the profession.

While social workers practicing administration do not usually see themselves as a group, it is worthwhile noting to what extent they do conform to the characteristics of a group as defined by Merton. Merton defines a group in terms of actions and perceptions.

- a. The members interact with one another in accord with established patterns and have established and characteristic social relations.
- b. The members define themselves as members.
- c. The members are defined as a group by others.²¹

Social workers in administration meet only one of the criteria of group identification, the last. However, this may be a beginning point for the formation of a new group within the profession.

Goode comments that, "No occupation, then becomes a profession without a struggle, just as no specialty develops inside a profession without antagonism."²² This is very much the situation that has grown up among social work clinicians and social work administrators in the past. Attitudes toward administrative requirements are often viewed as interfering with the practice of clinical skills within the agency setting. These barriers within the profession, although fading, have left a residue. Resistance may not only come from those who do not agree with the formation of a new specialty, which is not an extension of the clinical model, it also may come from those who fear that the standards for administrative practice will be raised jeopardizing existing statuses. As Goode notes, " . . . any plan to raise standards defines some practitioners as incompetent. Any talk of the new 'science' on which the profession rests its claims may be met with derision by the old timers, who believe that at best they command an art, perhaps a skill to be acquired through apprenticeship."²³ For the majority of social workers, professional practice exists within the framework of the social agency, and is always subject to its constraints. Once social workers have moved into administrative positions, members of the profession still expect them to reflect their

professional value base in all their administrative decisions, even though this may play no real role in their continuing advancement.

The role and allegiances of the professional in a bureaucracy has occupied a number of the sociological theorists. Goode has observed that once professionals enter a bureaucracy, they become less directly dependent on the professional community for career advancement and more dependent on the organization.²⁴ Scott has identified areas of conflict for the professional in a bureaucratic environment from a theoretical perspective. He cites the professional as having resistance to the bureaucratic rules and standards and supervision, and having only a conditional loyalty to the bureaucracy.²⁵ From a more pragmatic point of view, Freidson asserts that the stereotype of bureaucracy being malign and professionalism being benign, overlooks some realities of the work place. First he notes that technical or professional expertise is not functionally neutral, and by implication not always benign in its application, and that " . . . the expertise of the professional is institutionalized into something similar to bureaucratic office."²⁶ He suggests that there should be equal suspicion of the professional as of the bureaucrat in matters of misplaced emphasis and self-protective mechanisms that negatively affect service. Thus each area must exert constraints on the other as different organizational or client needs are taken into account, while remaining cognizant that they are part of the same system.

This excursion into some of the biases of the professional toward different organizational roles relates to the identification of attitudes which social workers, even those in positions of administrative responsibility, may have toward formalizing their knowledge and

skills in these areas. Conflicting values, denial, or cynicism may exist depending on the agency style, organizational structure, sources of funds, and individual frame of reference. For some individuals this conflict represents more strain than gain. For others who may even continue their practice affiliation, the challenge of accumulating multiple roles is not viewed as a negative strain.

Sources of potential strain, may be seen as organizational barriers. Becker and Strauss identify three such areas located within peer or supervisory groups:

- a. Once the organization has trained and invested time in the worker, supervisors may block movement or decide that the training disqualifies the individual for the higher level job.
- b. Professional peers may regard the individual as a turn-coat and the desire to maintain group allegiance may impede mobility and necessary informal learning from the new peer group.
- c. The small agency may not have a managerial career ladder, or due to a limited number of administrative personnel, offer few opportunities for identification with a new peer group and the necessary informal training to occur.²⁷

Two approaches to the consideration of management of multiple roles have emerged from the sociological perspective of role theory. One views the outcome of managing multiple roles as essentially negative while the other focuses on the gratifications which may propel an individual to add more roles. Goode developed the concept of role strain to encompass what he perceived as a normal conflict occurring when more than one role was held by an individual.

Role relations are seen as a sequence of "role bargains" and as a continuing process of selection among alternative role behaviors, in which each individual seeks to reduce his role strain.²⁸

Later theorists have sought to analyze the management of role relations as a process not of avoidance, but the seeking of potential sources of gratification. Sieber presents four types of formal outcomes which can occur as the result of role accumulation: role privileges, overall status security, resources for status enhancement and role performance, personality enrichment and ego gratification.²⁹ He proposes that while overload and conflict may occur, there are enough compensations for expansion of roles to merit consideration of ways to facilitate and encourage role accumulation.

This conceptualization is particularly useful for the development of a philosophy of program recruitment and implementation. Much of what has been said and written about the need for more and better social work administrators focuses on the deficits, lacks, gaps and resistances encountered within the profession. In presenting the program to future participants there must be a clarity of potential benefits to the individual as well as to the agency, the profession and the future of social welfare services.

Sieber also recognizes that there are instances where the accumulation of roles permits an illegal accrual of privileges. He cites the situation of the adult student who carries the multiple roles of student, employee and family member. He observes that, "precisely because adult students are viewed as occupying a very time consuming set of roles, they are often permitted a great deal of leeway. This situation allows ample room for the accumulation of privileges at the expense of obligations."³⁰ This has relevance for continuing education program planning. The presentation of the program requirements must be clear regarding home assignments, papers, class participation. Students

must not be allowed to trade on the pressures of their other commitments to pressure for lower program standards once having committed themselves to the program.

Career and Mobility in Social Work Administration

The planning for the new program encompassed a concern for social workers' sense of career direction and interests in mobility within the profession. An exploration of the work done in the field revealed historical patterns and current trends.

Mobility varies for different sub-groups within all professions. Social work has traditionally offered middle class women a respectable career direction since the late nineteenth century. More recently it has been considered a career representing opportunities for socially mobile ethnic minorities and working class men. Until the 1950s, women predominated in the profession. A concern for improving the status of the profession led to a recruitment strategy to encourage men to seek careers within social work. Since that period the representation of women in key administrative positions has dwindled yearly. A survey conducted in 1976 revealed that during the period from 1957 through 1976, the percentage of women executives dropped from sixty percent to sixteen percent.³¹ Other studies have shown a patterned relationship between sex and a variety of administrative job levels.³²

The mobility of women in social work illustrates a pattern common in the professions. Chernesky lists a number of internal

barriers stemming from psychological accommodation to socialization in the home, school or work place which have contributed to lowered self esteem and lowered expectations for success.³³ However she notes that the actual research linking psychological factors as potential barriers to women's mobility has been subject to scrutiny by O'Leary and found to be inconclusive.³⁴

Chernesky stresses that outside or external obstacles such as those related to organizational structures, agency professional network systems, and the professional community have received much less attention than the internal barriers.³⁵ She identifies conventional management skills training programs as locating the obstacles to advancement within the individual rather than within the structure of the system. This may be a somewhat narrow interpretation of the value of educational and training programs in specialized administrative areas. It is the view of this writer that both areas deserve attention simultaneously. Chernesky's argument has merit in that there has been considerably more work relating to the identification of internal barriers, and exclusive focus on upgrading skills will not change systemic institutional patterns of discrimination. There has been some work highlighting structural obstacles. Kantor has observed that women tend to fill the lower level positions particularly those which provide little opportunity for substantial moves into leadership roles.³⁶ Other jobs often filled by women may appear to be at a high level. However if they are not in the main hierarchy of organizational responsibility, and do not offer opportunities for professional expansion or higher job possibilities, they are equally constricting.

The role of informal learning, group allegiances and admittance

to "crucial trade secrets," are cited by Becker and Strauss as important factors in the successful negotiation of upward career movement within occupations.³⁷ While these authors do not address themselves to the question of sexual discrimination, the areas they mention are some of those in which women have difficulties when the agency communication channels are dominated by men.

For some social workers the assumption of administrative leadership may threaten a style of work acquired through social work training and supported throughout the professional socialization process. Schools of social work may contribute to this pattern of job immobility. Social workers often emerge from their graduate training only moderately prepared for their professional career within an organizational framework. The realities of the administrative components of different job levels, and the steps on the promotional ladder for a career path remain unclear. Unprepared for higher program management challenges within the field, a number of social workers drift into, and remain, in lower level positions combining supervisory and administrative responsibilities and obtaining minimal satisfaction from their work.

Recently within the field of social work education there has been some recognition of the stresses of transition from direct practice to higher level positions. Patti and Austin have identified areas of "social-psychological discontinuity" which they have translated into a framework relevant to the development of educational curricula. They have highlighted the following areas:

- a. Orientation to authority--social work managers must be able to exercise direct authority by virtue of their position and responsibility, rather than relying on their professional background as social workers.

- b. Ordering of priorities--the need to be pragmatic about energy and time in relation to competing priorities.
- c. Orientation toward work--the need to be task and goal-oriented restraining intimacy and process modalities.
- d. Peer relationships--acceptance that supervisory and management relations might be dominated by competition for scarce resources rather than supportive and sharing.³⁸

Patti and Austin view the master's level program not only as a time for socialization to the profession of social work, but as a time of socialization toward possible future roles within the profession. They adopt Merton's concept of anticipatory socialization. Drawing on the areas where they have observed role transition discontinuities, they have tried to prepare the students to have a positive orientation toward social work administrators as a group within the profession.

It is interesting to note that the issue of middle level management is rarely addressed professionally. It surfaces tangentially within isolated articles on continuing education in management areas. However the question about what happens to the professional social worker in middle-management, within the structure of the profession is rarely raised. We may conjecture that no one expects to be in middle-management long. The aim is to move on to a higher position, return to clinical areas, consultation or teaching. The mythology of the middle-management position is that it is a faceless, thankless job with few intrinsic satisfactions and myriad pressures. Any program of education designed for those in middle-management positions must recognize that to be effective it has to capture people at a momentary interface where the job structure holds challenge and they have not bought into a negative mythology. The educational offering must be appropriately timed, and designed.

The program under discussion focused on the social worker in middle-management whose access to the resources to produce major changes within an organization are often limited, but whose impact on program implementation and service delivery can be significant.

The immediate goal of the project was the design of a program which by its presentation would encourage this diverse group of social workers in their positive identification with administration and management, and serve as a vehicle toward broadening their knowledge and conceptual skills in administrative areas.

Footnotes

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CHAPTER III

THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical base for the design evolved from an exploration of two areas: the structural relationships necessary to the planning of a new program, and principles of adult learning important for educational design. The theoretical perspective provided in this chapter established the grounding knowledge for the development of a series of principles to inform program design decisions.

Organizational Planning and Environmental Constraints

Traditionally, continuing education has not been an integral part of the programmatic core of the educational institution. Continuing education programs have received limited support, and linkages with the sponsoring organizations have tended to be fairly loose. While the role of continuing education is changing, as more universities see it as an avenue for expansion, there is still a stepchild quality to the relationship. This leaves the continuing education program with the benefits of significant autonomy in the realm of educational planning and operation coupled with the liability of tenuous fiscal stability based almost entirely on enrollment. The design and implementation of any continuing education program must take into account these factors related to the position of the program within the educational system.

The dependency on student enrollment for both individual course and overall program survival requires that close linkages be developed between the program and its external environment. A new program must develop an organizational structure and operating style which facilitates the nurturing of new organizational relationships, visibility and acceptance within the profession. The responsibility of a continuing education program to carefully define its sources of primary support creates the direction from which a pragmatic planning emphasis must flow. In the program under discussion, the Hunter College School of Social Work was the primary sponsor and legitimating auspice. While the primary financial support came from independent student enrollment, essential start up resources were provided by the school.

The focus on social work administration as an area for post-master's study raised questions of potential student interest and acceptance given the uneven commitment to education of social work administrators within the profession. A number of factors explored in the preceding chapter led the writer to suspect that program legitimacy was still a question to consider at the initiation of the program planning phase in 1976. The process of assessing and securing program legitimacy is complex, and requires a knowledge of the broader setting within which the program is to operate. As Evans has noted, "All formal organizations are embedded in an environment of other organizations as well as in a complex of norms, values and collectivities of the society at large."¹ Every aspect of a new program should accentuate the special qualities of the endeavor so that it may break through the existing web

of educational resources with an image of its own. However, an early success is only the creation of an image, and just initiates a process which must be consciously nurtured by program planners and staff. The loose support from the institutional auspice combined with the question of legitimacy in the eyes of potential program supporters, contributes to the organizational marginality of many continuing education programs. In the program under discussion, every design decision was considered within the framework of supporting program legitimacy: the grouping of program components, the program structure, the selection of faculty, and the relationships with the external environment.

Evans in his discussion of organization sets mentions the importance of the organization's boundary personnel. He defines boundary personnel as those who have relationships in the broader community which relate to the functions of the organization. They both define the agency's policy and position, and protect and maintain the boundaries.² Within a continuing education program, there is a major focus on the external environment. All staff and faculty are considered boundary personnel, and in an extension of vision, past and present students may also function in that capacity. All will have slightly different interpretations of the program, and it is appropriate that their roles also differ.

Exchange: Identifying the Intangible Trade-off

The concept of exchange as a way of looking at the interplay of human relationships was introduced by Homans.³ Its adaptation to organizational behavior as developed by Levine and White⁴ is useful to

consider when looking at the dynamics and context of the ongoing relationships which a new program must establish and maintain to insure support from its auspice, faculty, students and the wider professional community. Levine and White define organizational exchange as, ". . . any voluntary activity between two organizations which has consequences actual or anticipated for the realization of their respective goals or objectives."⁵ The activity referred to is general. It need not be exclusively reciprocal, nor consist of material goods, or produce benefits in the immediate present. The concept can be extended to exchanges made between organizations and groups, and organizations and subgroups as demonstrated in Weissman's analysis of the relationship between a neighborhood council and its volunteers.⁶

The organizational marginality and the dependence on numerous variables external to the new continuing education program require that the potential for multiple exchange bases be examined closely to insure that the most useful reciprocities may be developed for the present and the future. The establishment of different bases for exchange requires clarity in the conceptual framework and goals of the program. Laufer presents a schema of four models based on whether the program activities are aimed at: (a) "improving the capabilities of individual human services in their professional or occupational capacities . . . " (b) ". . . improving the ways in which human services are organized and delivered . . ."⁷ Laufer notes that educators have one or two basic orientations; either that of providing a service to a consumer, individual or organization, or that of the change agent, where the individual or organization becomes the target of change.⁸ While these

orientation are not mutually exclusive, the dominant thrust of the educational orientation affects the mode of planning, recruitment, operation and bases for exchange. Lauffer further differentiates among the two orientations depending on the target of the educational effort. He presents a paradigm of continuing education practice. The four models he develops from this attempt at categorization are: consumer choice, training, consultation, and systems change.⁹ The first model, consumer choice, has the most relevance for the program under discussion. The basic premise underlying this model is that responsibility for: engaging in the learning process, utilizing new knowledge and skills back in the work setting, improving or changing organizational operations, remains with the individual learner. This approach relates to the principles of adult learning which stress the importance of recognizing the maturity of the adult learner in the learning process. The importance of adult learning principles for continuing education in social work are discussed in a later section of this chapter.

The nature of the relationship of learners to a program places constraints on the planners, and sets the stage for a dependence on multiple facets of exchange offered by the students to the program. These exchanges may have a positive or negative impact. The students, whether they take one course or many, perform important ambassadorial roles. They give the program corporeality, demonstrate that it truly exists, and in talking about it to friends and co-workers perform extended boundary functions. If their experience with the program has not been positive then they perform their extended boundary function to a negative end, i.e., steering people away. If their experience has been positive then they encourage acceptance of the program in the broader community, and

help to stabilize its organizational status.

A goal of the program was to attract experienced social workers who were currently engaged in administrative work. A series of exchanges between program and student were anticipated. Experienced participants would increase the potential for positive peer interaction in classes. Shared learning would foster the beginning of a support system of social workers functioning in complex middle-management roles. Movement in both these areas would be expected to have a positive impact on program legitimacy. The dilemma for the new program, was that the constraints mentioned earlier, precluded a highly selective screening of prospective students. Certain basic criteria were adhered to: MSW status, and past or present administrative experience encouraged, but not required. Unfortunately, the program in its early growth stages could not uniformly live up to its part of the exchange regarding peer levels. However, in recognizing the exchange value of peer interaction and learning, the program planners were constantly aware of the need to move in the direction of increasing selectivity among students.

If we assume that there will be disparity among the participants at the early stages of a program's growth, strategies to mitigate the effects must be considered once the program is implemented. Formal and informal feedback must be encouraged, in order to assess the scope, span and fit of the course material. Necessarily the faculty must be skillful at assisting to build class expectations which address the interests of as many students as possible. Communication between faculty, staff and students must be encouraged throughout the duration of each semester, if frustrations at faculty and student levels are to be

minimized, and program objectives maintained. If such a program is to attract faculty of a high quality, then all staff must recognize the difficult role which the faculty have in a post-master's program of this nature and provide maximum support in exchange for faculty flexibility.

The faculty selection process must include consideration of the exchange potential in the relationship between program and instructor. The program planners must be concerned not only with obtaining faculty who have flexibility and the appropriate teaching style for adult professionals, but also with other attributes and linkages which they may bring with them. For example, the faculty members drawn from administrative practice rather than from the university bring the status of their primary work affiliation and position which may serve to draw participants to the program. However the level of the faculty drawn from the field may also determine the level of the students. Agency directors probably will not come to be taught by assistant directors. Assistant directors may not come either. The faculty member who comes from the university and remains outside the pattern of the work agency-related hierarchy, may bypass the problem mentioned above, but have limited actual administrative experience to illustrate theoretical material.

The vulnerability of new continuing education programs exists in relation to internal as well as external pressures. Planners and program staff must be aware of possible areas of internal organizational adaptation which may take place. The early contacts between client and organization are particularly significant. It is here that the responses of boundary personnel may play a key role in a process of

goal displacement and force subsequent organizational adaptation.¹⁰ Aspects of this problem have been mentioned earlier in relation to the need for numbers of participants, and the potentially conflicting need to maintain consistent criteria for admission to the program. The issue for consideration is that a conscious decision should be made and clarified with all staff serving in boundary roles. For example, faculty, while not necessarily part of any final policy-decision making process, should be included in discussions regarding the viability of the student mix for maximum learning. They perform in multiple boundary roles, including preregistration discussions with potential students, the development of classroom norms regarding expectations and the carrying of the program image to the wider professional community.

The impact of the clientele, in this instance students, on organizational stability at the inception of a new program is a phenomenon which has been observed and discussed in the literature of organization theory. It is particularly relevant to the type of program under discussion. Rosengren cites a pattern whereby organizations initially overcome the threat of instability through several self-protective mechanisms. Typically they start out by offering a wide scope of services to as broad a spectrum of the defined target population as possible. Attracting a heterogeneous group insures the organization the maximum support at the outset, as well as the image of success among competitors in its organization set. Offering a wide range of services provides support for organizational insecurity in terms of uncertain technology and the lack of assurance that program achievement will be registered in depth. Gradually as a program focus emerges, the

organization begins to stabilize in these areas and may narrow its target population and services.¹¹

In the early life of a continuing education program, a wide scope of course offerings combined with broad diversity among students may dilute the impact of courses. The more sophisticated student may not be challenged, and may seek educational resources elsewhere leaving the lower level students. Thus the students themselves may provide the definition of the level of the program despite the planners intent, unless efforts are taken to monitor and perhaps guide enrollment. Program policy must be clear as well as flexible to strike the balance to insure that values and goals of the program not be diffused through the efforts to achieve organizational stability and program justification through short term results.¹²

Program Access and Boundary Roles

An important component of the design of a new program such as a continuing education program is an evaluation of the effect of the program design and presentation on the members of the target population, including both the positive and negative impacts. A strategy should be developed to tap members of the target population who made no inquiry at all, to determine whether lack of interest, environmental constraints, or some programmatic issue, formed the basis for their non-response. Monitoring the pattern of inquiry, participation and rejection of the program may provide some useful indicators for future program design. Such an effort might also provide clues as to whether the program was not making itself available to certain groups of potential participants despite their general eligibility for participation.¹³ One way of

tackling this area from the point of view of the program's internal access routes would be to examine what Kadushin refers to as " . . . many subtle behaviors not systematically coded as regulations although they nevertheless have this effect."¹⁴ While Kadushin is referring primarily to direct service social agencies, he mentions a variety of programmatic areas of organizational behavior which would be considered which are useful to explore in the context of a continuing education program. He notes such tangible and intangible aspects of program as, informational materials, location and scheduling, role of gatekeepers and boundary personnel and their availability for questions, and the atmosphere created by staff, administration and faculty. All of these are effective channeling devices, made by conscious or unconscious decisions.¹⁵ And all may serve as organizational incentives or obstacles to enrollment.

Other types of incentives to access exist outside the program. Freidson comments from a sociological frame of reference, that the successful design of access routes to services must be seen as a partial function of the structural point at which introduction is made into the lay referral system.¹⁶ An adaptation of Freidson's observation would bring us to the concept that attention must be given to the structural points where interaction occurs between the program and the relevant parameters of the organization set of the target population of social workers. In looking at these structural points of contact we are led to consider possible incentives and obstacles originating in different sectors of the external environment. For example, the attitudes of the social work agencies as demonstrated by supportive or non-supportive actions toward social workers seeking outside formal training in

administration; the attitudes of the National Association of Social Workers, as demonstrated by degree and manner of recognizing the administrative practice role for social workers, the flexibility of the job market, the competition from other professions for available job openings. These are just some of the areas where incentives or obstacles to participation may exist within the organization set of the target population.

Loose Coupling and Program Flexibility

A number of the issues discussed in this section have pointed to the need for an operating mode for the program which would capitalize on the fluidity inherent in the early growth stages of a new educational program. The internal structure must be conceptualized in such a way that communication and feedback are encouraged, in order to promote program adaptation, as it both shapes and is shaped by its environment. This involves the identification of the component parts of the program and their interrelationship. One way of looking at the relationships among organizational elements in educational settings is to consider them as fluid groupings of "loosely coupled systems."¹⁷ Weick defines loose coupling as a process in which coupled events are responsive to each other while retaining their own identity and separateness. "Loose coupling also carries connotations of impermanence, dissolvability and tacitness all of which are potentially crucial properties of the 'glue' that holds organizations together."¹⁸ Some of the different elements which can lend themselves to scrutiny regarding the extent to which they are tightly or loosely coupled are: events succeeding each other in time, different processes and their outcomes, and

relationships between sub-groupings of personnel. Areas of tight coupling include the questions of who handles disciplinary actions and social control; how a teacher gets books into the classroom; what kind of innovations need to get clearance by whom and how certification occurs.¹⁹ Weick postulates that it is around the issues of certification and of specifying who the students are that tight coupling would be predicted to occur when technology and outcomes are unclear.²⁰

The concept of loosely coupled systems is presented as a conceptual strategy to sensitize the observer or planner to aspects of organizational functioning which don't fall within the neat confines of rational planning. The intent is to counteract the danger of " . . . portraying organizations in inappropriate terms which suggest an excess of unity, integration, coordination and consensus."²¹

In applying the concept of loose coupling to continuing education program analysis and planning there are both liabilities and advantages which emerge depending on the stage in the life cycle of the organization and its immediate environment. Weick analyzes the potential functions and dysfunctions of loosely coupled systems, in relation to the specific variables of communication and coordination, and their role in organizational adaptability. He asserts that loosely coupled systems have many independent facets which allow them to be more sensitive and responsive to their environment than tightly coupled systems. This permits quick, localized adaptations to specific conditions, without necessarily involving the entire organization. The potential dysfunctions relate to possible lack of restraint or faddish responses; a lack of consideration as to whether there should be a wider organizational response; and a potential disequilibrium in educational democracy

which may have been produced by a lack of sufficient standardization. Localization of trouble spots, on the other hand, carries a potential for positive impact on the organization.

In the project under discussion the complexity of possible couplings was minimized in order to focus on the basic concept as it related to the actors in the program; the administrative staff, faculty and students. Although Weick does not introduce the concept of a series of exchanges in his discussion of loosely coupled systems, it may be possible to view the interaction among different elements as forming exchanges. As was mentioned earlier the concept of exchange is not bound by immediacy of consequences, a tight time frame, or specific reciprocity. Thus it would provide some of the rationale for the "responsiveness" which Weick defines as the dynamic quality of loose coupling.

Depending on the life cycle stage of an organization, different liabilities and advantages may emerge. Weick points out that despite possible dysfunctional risks of loosely coupled systems in educational settings they perform two very positive functions. Loosely coupled systems allow more self-determination by the actors involved and this contributes to a sense of efficacy, and control on their part. In tightly coupled systems individual discretion is more limited, and a sense of efficacy more circumscribed. His second assertion is that a loosely coupled system should be more economical to run than a tight system because of the decrease in costs related to coordinating and monitoring people and their activities.

The value of Weick's concept of loose coupling is that planning takes on a less rigid quality. The tension between the areas where

tight coupling must occur and those where loose coupling appears to be the most useful mode no longer seems to have negative implications in the organizational plan. The planner is free to look more objectively at the fluidity of organizational needs over time and to appropriate the resources of time and manpower when and where they are needed.

Adult Learning and Continuing Education Teaching

In this section I have given attention to concepts underlying adult learning and teaching which relate to issues of access and commitment. Involving adults in a formal course of learning does not depend solely on active recruitment techniques. Nor is it a one-way process of movement on the part of potential participants. The process of engagement involves movement of different kinds. The impact of the auspice, the structure of the program, the focus, choice of faculty, communication patterns and program style all have an effect on the individual's decision to participate or not. The conditions both internal and external to the program must combine in a positive manner to encourage the investment of time, money and energy in a process of formal learning.

In attempting to define the structure of engagement, this section deals with different theoretical approaches toward adult learning, each of which contribute to our understanding of the forces that move the working adult to seek out the role of student. One school of thought identifies adult development as a continued quest toward increased autonomy and characteristic of human growth from childhood through adulthood.²² White introduced the concept of an intrinsic force

for dealing with the environment which transcended primary drives and was distinct from maturational energies which he termed "competence motivation." He describes the activities generated by the motivation to achieve competence as those which promote an effective interaction with the environment.²³ He suggests that for the child, the achievement of dealing competently with some aspect of the environment brings its own reward. While for the adult, the roots of the thrust toward achieving competence are much more complex, often linked with the tangible results of increased income or career advancement. He speculates about the continuity of daily activities and the need for variety.

" . . . It may be that the satisfaction of effectance contributes significantly to those feelings of interest which often sustain us so well in day-to-day actions, particularly when the things we are doing have continuing elements of novelty."²⁴

In looking at adult learning from another perspective, Knox cites inertia as a major inhibiting factor which leads to the rejection of challenges that demand new skills or knowledge. He describes the trend of adult activities as reinforcing stability and minimizing change.²⁵ It may be that the search for predictability and stability is in constant tension with the force to master new elements of the environment and the difference between the two is only in the narrowed or broadened definition of the parameters of the environment to be mastered. Familiarity, repetition, and minimal change represent a certain kind of mastery dictated by limits and control rather than by expansion and risk.

The implications for program design and the stimulation of interest and commitment on the part of practicing social workers, is to

recognize this tension. It may exist in different dimensions for people at different stages of their working lives and that this would affect their attitudes about exploring new areas.

Other educators have pointed out that the inclination to return to a formal learning experience relates to personal learning styles as well as basic attitudes toward work. Houle postulates that there are five groups of professionals: reinforcers, innovators, pace setters, majority adapters, and laggards.²⁶ Each group uses different methods of learning. The reinforcers and innovators are in the vanguard of the profession and rarely take part in organized continuing education programs. Pace setters are concerned with the profession and want to take part in its structures, including continuing education. They are the key link between the majority adapters, who are the largest group of participants in continuing education programs, and the two leadership groups who pioneer advances in the profession. While Houle based these categorizations on his experience with members of the medical profession they can be adapted to provide a basis for consideration of attitudinal barriers among different sub-groups within a profession. An assumption of the program under discussion in this report is that while some social work administrators view themselves as the reinforcers or innovators within the profession and do not utilize formal educational programs as a primary learning resource, there are many others, probably a majority, particularly at middle management levels who would fall into the pace setter and majority adopter groups. For these sub-groups, a formal educational program would provide structure, credibility and support in a setting removed from the immediacy of work performance. The new program could not seek to engage administrators at all levels. Based on the

statistics of the last decade, on the movement of social workers into lower and middle management positions, it may be conjectured that many will stay within middle management, moving laterally as well as vertically throughout their careers. The program under consideration would serve as a support for this sub-group in the profession. Houle's categories focus on the need for differentiated approaches based on the professional self-image of different sub-groups.

Learning Theory

The process of program planning involves the development of an approach toward adult learning, which in turn can be conveyed in the presentation of the program to potential students. While no single theory encompasses all adult learning styles and content areas, there are partial theories which provide insight into the learning-teaching transaction at the adult level. The theoretical explanations which describe the circumstances under which adults make a commitment of personal resources to new learning are addressed in the literature in discussions of cognitive learning theory, modeling theory and andragogy.

Jerome Bruner, one of the foremost exponents of cognitive learning theory stresses the processes of individual discovery. Discovery takes place through the channeling of curiosity into new ways of looking at experience and knowledge. The building of linkages between past experiences and new knowledge and experiences, promotes an essentially individual learning process. While the learner needs freedom to explore and take risks he or she also needs the stimulus and intellectual challenge to support a climate where individual control and organization of learning processes can take place. In summary Bruner's

philosophy underlined by his research, reflects a belief in the processes of the intellect to organize, reflect and integrate experience with knowledge, and to constantly evolve new patterns from the old.²⁷ Bruner's approach is particularly relevant to the planning of continuing education programs. In his stress on the attitudinal states and their impact on receptiveness and readiness for learning he identifies situations which may present barriers.²⁸ At the adult level where the decision to enter a structured learning situation is a personal one, there are no reliable resources to support the potential learner when emotional or psychological barriers interfere. Complex pressures of job, family and other priorities can impede learning and distort decision-making. If the program design is presented accurately in the program informational materials then it can have a clarifying effect on the decision-making process of the potential student. Once within the learning situation creative program design and sensitive teaching can reduce the effects of outside pressures on the student. However, potential students should not be lured into educational commitments by promises that everything will work out. Each student must make an individual decision based on his or her own priorities.

The major exponent of the principles of adult learning on andragogy is Malcolm Knowles. He states that the adult impetus for formal learning is dictated by maturational stages and environmental or cultural expectations of the performance of social roles. Knowles draws on Overstreet's early presentations of adult maturity and independence in a social context;²⁹ Erikson's discussions of generativity and the growth of ego integrity;³⁰ and finally Maslow's conceptualization of a hierarchy of needs, initiating with the thrust toward survival and

progressing toward increasing self-development which culminates in self-actualization.³¹

Knowles' strength is in the development of an integrated structure for linking the continuing maturational processes of the adult with readiness to engage in learning. Through a focus on the adult's self concept, experience, and sense of time and place, he outlined four assumptions of andragogy as a guide to the adult learning processes. His approach highlights the importance of a conscious focus on the climate, style and content of the design of continuing education programs.

1. Self Concept. The critical indicator of the achievement of adult status is when the individual develops a sense of self direction and leaves childhood dependence behind.³² The process of maturation is not always steady, and once engaged in the learning-teaching transaction, adults as students tend to revert to a more dependent role. The adult educator must be aware of this shift, and seek to establish a climate of collaboration and above all assist each student to identify his own learning style and self-directed path.³³

The decision of the adult to return to a formal educational setting may involve anticipation of pain. New learning shakes the adult's established order of things. Knowles points out that the rewards of learning must be clear so that they outweigh ambivalence and resistance.³⁴

2. Experience. The adult defines himself in terms of what he has done and encountered in life. The accumulation of experience provides a base for the integration of old and new learning and a broadened context for discovery.

Those engaged in teaching adults should recognize and draw on the experiences of the adult learner, for not only is it a resource for continued learning, but provides a demonstration of respect for the contribution the individual has to make in a structured learning situation.³⁵

3. Readiness. The third assumption of andragogy is based on the impact that social and cultural role expectations have on the individual's identification of learning needs and priorities.³⁶ The developmental phases of middle adulthood are characterized by the increasing stress on the successful performance of social roles. Within our culture, work roles dominate in determining

family social status, individual identity and worth. Thus for the adult worker, learning related to enhancing work roles and functioning, acquires a special significance.

4. Orientation to Learning. The assumption of andragogy is that adults have a problem-centered approach to learning based on the tasks associated with the performance of their social roles. They seek resources to help with pressing issues, rather than seeking knowledge in general. Theory must be integrated with practice skills in such a way that the relevance is clear and a conceptual framework for the development of increasing competence is possible.³⁷

The decision whether or not to participate in a continuing education program is a personal one dependent on a very individual equation involving need, interest, resources and direction. The role of the program must be to promote communication processes, informal and formal, which will allow potential participants to carry on their own interior dialogue necessary for responsible, self-directed decision making.

Other perspectives on the processes of adult learning stress the importance of the active involvement of students in practicing new modes of behavior and observing role models. Processes of reinforcement of effective behavior and expectations of the opportunity to rehearse new modes of behavior combine to offer incentive to the student to adapt new material to individual use. Bandura offers a cogent analysis of the value and role that modeling plays in learning.³⁸ As mentioned earlier when discussing the principles of andragogy, the immediate utility and timeliness of new learning is a prerequisite for commitment to a program of study. Thus the opportunity for rehearsal, observation and analysis of the effects of new behavior options is crucial in the presentation of the program to its public. In a situation where observational learning is used as an approach, Bandura recommends

that the models should demonstrate a high level of competence and expertise. This serves as a basis for strengthening their influence as sources of social behavior modification.³⁹ For social workers who are in the process of expanding their roles in areas where value and inter-professional conflicts may appear, it is important that they have the opportunity to observe and try out new thought and behavior patterns.

In planning a program for this population, it thus becomes apparent that the importance of the instructor as a role model cannot be underestimated. Frequently social workers in administrative positions do not have adequate role models within the work setting; agencies are sometimes too small to carry a diverse administrative staff, and if there are potential role models they often suffer from the same lack of training as the observer who hopes to learn from them.

In the search for instructors, attention must be paid to the ability to integrate new material, its conceptual base and pragmatic applications with active demonstrations of use. The immediate problem-solving potential of new learning must be evident for adults to feel that participation in a formal learning experience will be of benefit to them.

Adult Learning and Social Work Continuing Education

Knowles' primary goal was to promote recognition among educators that the adult experience is one which conditions the individual for a different approach toward formal education and learning. Andragogical principles while stressing the differences between children and adults, does not focus on the special characteristics of different groups of adult students.

Recently there have been a number of efforts to integrate the principles of andragogy and the theoretical background provided by social scientists in cognitive and behavioral learning, into social work education. Rothman has refined and adapted the principles of andragogy, providing a useful context for the planning of continuing education programs and the development of a framework of relevant issues. She has isolated the following five elements for consideration in her attempt to develop a systematic approach to instructional methodology:

- a. the nature of the students
- b. the mode of teaching
- c. the objectives of the learning experience
- d. the context in which the learning takes place
- e. the content and nature of what is to be learned.⁴⁰

These areas are important both for the development of an instructional methodology and when focusing on early contacts and potential student engagement. For the purposes of the program under discussion, the nature of the student and the context in which the learning takes place, are the most influential elements, dominating further planning options.

Concerning the nature of the students, Rothman identifies characteristics of different groups of learners in different contexts. While she accepts Knowles' assumptions about the importance of the adult self-image for the achievement of self direction, however, she cautions against oversimplification and a methodological blindness to individual and group characteristics. She emphasizes that the concept of expectation of adult independence in learning may be misleading.⁴¹ Through her own experience teaching adults she identifies some unexpected ambiguities which surface as the experienced practitioner returns for

training in a formal educational setting. She cites that sophisticated professionals are less apt to reveal difficulties and reluctant to expose gaps particularly if the main objective is to analyze their own work. This group prefers a focus on knowledge and skills which could not be acquired through formal channels of professional education, emphasizing changes in the environment external to themselves. The members of this group prefer to see the teachers as experts whether or not they choose to use them that way. The students look for a teacher whose own prestige in the field reinforces or enhances their own self-image.⁴²

In terms of recruitment incentives for students, Rothman points out that the overriding characteristic of continuing education programs is that they fall outside a formal degree hierarchy and depend entirely on potential participant inclination toward learning. This factor colors many other aspects of program design and its presentation to the public.⁴³ The program's climate becomes very important when teacher and learner are engaged over a short time period. Rothman notes the need for developing sufficient, but non-threatening degrees of informality, an atmosphere of mutual assistance where reciprocity and respect for similarities and differences becomes a valued norm for the group. The difficulty in creating this kind of learning atmosphere when each participant comes with different experiences and expectations is accentuated by the limited time span of each course and the limited commitment of each student to the program itself. Others have observed that the evaluative and judgmental attributes of adults become constraints on short term programs. Essentially, issues and options are magnified in importance, and decisions must be made based on limited information

within a short time period. There is pressure on the planner and educator to utilize every minute in a judicious and focused manner.⁴⁴

The requirement of teacher flexibility and ability to adapt to the needs and level of each student group demands skill and comfort with differing approaches. Swack and Rothman concur with Knowles that the facilitating role is key for the teacher of adults. However Rothman cautions that, "To be tied to a single strategy in advance of the live encounters with the students runs afoul of the notion of flexibility in adult education. The teacher can not be less inventive than the students. Each strategy has its distinct appeal and appropriateness for different learning goals."⁴⁵

The learning objectives cannot be neglected in the planning process. In continuing education they become particularly important because of the necessity for their clarity since they serve as the binding element in the learning-teaching contract. The educational objectives provide the basis for the coming together of the instructor and participant, as well as the basis on which the learning experience is evaluated. As Rothman notes, the criteria for evaluation of a course or program will be different in short-term education than in a formal degree program. The basic insularity of individual courses within a continuing education program makes it imperative that each course stand on its own in terms of objectives and expected outcomes.⁴⁶

The decision of the individual to participate in such a program brings with it an interest in learning as well as the tendency to make a quick assessment of the teacher competence, relevance of the content to current problem-solving needs, and continuous evaluation of the learning objectives. For the program planning this implies a need to have ongoing

monitoring and feedback as integral parts of the progress of each course. Engaging the learner both initially and throughout a semester is linked inextricably to the role that evaluation and feedback plays in the overall design of the program.⁴⁷

Adult education has a broader context than that just considered above. It is not always seen as the benign process by which people are encouraged to upgrade their skills and expand their options. Some observers of adult educational process refer to an inappropriate emphasis on methods, techniques, and conservative intent of the growing field of adult education.⁴⁸ This approach draws heavily on the work of Paolo Friere who stressed the import of learning processes which allow for increasing the individual's awareness of the socio-political influences which affect their lives as a first step toward transforming society and its institutions.⁴⁹

Professional continuing education is by definition vocationally oriented and shares very little in the qualities so strenuously argued for by such writers as Friere, London and Ohlinger.

These detractors from the current state of continuing education raise some unsettling issues. They cite the "pacifying and domesticating" aspects of continuing education.⁵⁰ The trend toward mandatory continuing education, and the packaging of knowledge as a marketplace commodity necessary to save man from obsolescence in the work force.⁵¹ Whether continuing education is seen as an insidious methodology, a trend toward control by institutions or a basis for increased working opportunities, no one denies the increase in interest in adult education programs in recent years.

Sawhill points to determinors of supply and demand as

explanations for the precipitous growth of adult education. He enumerates the following aspects of the environmental context in which this growth has occurred.

On the side of supply, institutions have responded to the decline in the pool of traditional applicants by casting about for new clienteles. On the demand side, adults have been deeply affected by the psychology of self-development by the women's movement, by rapid shifts in the job market, by recertification requirements in certain professions, and by a combination of leisure time and discretionary income.⁵²

Sawhill stresses that because of the proliferation of opportunities and the vulnerability of adults in their feeling of never too old to learn, adults offerings should be as rigorously monitored and have similar standards as exist in formal more traditional programs. He puts adult education programs in a context where they are to be treated thoughtfully and with responsibility on the part of the institutions serving as sponsors and planners.

The maintenance of standards relates to methods of design, program presentation, implementation and evaluation. Inducements to participate must be based on reality, rather than the fears and vulnerabilities of a particular group. These concerns guided the design of the planning process of the program under discussion and led to the intensive exploration of the nature of the target group for the post-master's program.

While adult education programs have proliferated for the general population, there has been a lack of participation in professional continuing education programs. Recent literature has focused on the importance of continuing education within the expanding context of professional education.⁵³ However as Lengrand points out voluntary participation in continuing education programs is limited. "Continuing

education programs seldom reach a third of those who need them. Graduates of schools of social work seem to respond to educational opportunities in proportionately smaller numbers than those with other master's degrees."⁵⁴ In recognition of the fast pace of change of technologies and methods, and pressures for accountability from outside the professions, state legislatures and professional associations have moved to develop relicensing requirements that either encourage or mandate participation of members in continuing education programs. Within the field of social work only six states have required continuing education for recertification.⁵⁵ New York is not one of those states, although there is currently movement in that direction. However, the general trend will undoubtedly change the perception of continuing education for the few, to a more universal expectation of participation, whether required or not.

Current Programs in Social Work Administration

There is a growing interest in continuing education in administration and management for social workers evidenced by courses based at schools of social work: the University of Texas at Austin, Case Western Reserve, University of Chicago, and Boston University, to name a few with the most varied offerings.⁵⁶ In the greater New York area, only two of the seven schools of social work offered courses during the summer of 1977, Adelphi and New York University.⁵⁷ For the year 1978, Columbia School of Social Work offered some courses and the Hunter College School of Social Work offered the program under discussion in this report. Under the auspices of the Institute for Not-for-Profit Management, a cooperative effort of the Graduate School of Business,

the School of Social Work and the Division of Health Sciences of Columbia University, a program was designed for top management levels working in a variety of non profit settings, among them social agencies.⁵⁸

New programs contributing to the content and design of curricula in administration through research and conferences are in progress at the University of Southern California⁵⁹ and the University of Washington.⁶⁰ A research component of the Washington project examines social work manager attitudes toward factors that may contribute to the quality of job performance and career mobility.⁶¹ The managers who comprised the sample population consistently rated education as being less important relative to job performance, career advancement and organizational entry than the other two factors of experience and personal characteristics.⁶² It might be inferred from these findings, which are corroborated in the literature according to the researcher, Hankins, that managers would be less likely to return to a formal educational setting for a protracted educational experience. They would be more likely to commit themselves to short-term continuing educational programs that would integrate their experience with new practical skills.

To date, the study reported above is the only one where representatives of middle level management were questioned about their attitudes regarding the relevance of education to their careers. Other surveys have reported on the view of the agency administrator. A study conducted in Detroit among a group of 110 administrators showed that all were in favor of a continuing education program, and a majority indicated that they would provide staff with paid time off to obtain education in administration.⁶³

The theoretical background as it has been presented in these two chapters led to the development of an interview guide to further refine the understanding of the target population and their attitudes about formal learning of administration. The results of the interviews are discussed in Chapter V. They highlighted many of the areas discussed in these chapters, and raised additional issues for planning consideration.

Footnotes

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- ⁵¹ Ohliger, op. cit., p. 50.
- ⁵² John C. Sawhill, "Lifelong Learning: Scandal of the Next Decade," Change (December-January 1978-79).
- ⁵³ Lauffer, op. cit., p. 3.

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⁵⁵Ibid.

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⁵⁹Marilyn A. Biggerstaff, "Administration Curriculum Development Project Mid-Year Report, February 1977," School of Social Work, University of Southern California.

⁶⁰Rino J. Patti, Educating for Management in Social Welfare (report of the Social Welfare Management Curriculum Development Project conducted under the Joint Auspices of the School of Social Work and the Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Washington, July 1976).

⁶¹Michele Hankins, "Managers Attitudes Regarding the Relative Values of Education, Experience and Personal Characteristics in Job Performance and Career Mobility," (May 1976), in Patti, op. cit.

⁶²Ibid., Summary Page.

⁶³Melvyn C. Raider, "Determining Need for Educational Programs in Administration of Social Services: A Case Study," Social Work Continuing Education Yearbook, 1974-75, Management in the Human Services, op. cit., p. 4.

CHAPTER IV

PROJECT DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND RESOURCES

Introduction

In the fall of 1977, the writer undertook initial steps toward definition of critical issues in the design of educational programs for social workers in administrative practice. As the planning progressed it became evident that interest and access were key issues for consideration. The need for ongoing formal learning in clinical areas has been established over the years, and resources made available within the field of social work. Social workers in administration have not had a similar, professionally supported, tradition of reliance on the field for structured opportunities to expand their competence.¹ Social workers who move into administrative positions have tended to rely on informal learning: role models, general observation of historical agency practice, and finally trial and error efforts. Until fairly recently the options for formal learning experiences within social work educational settings have been few, reinforcing the pattern of agency-based learning.

Pressures both in and outside the profession have contributed to an increase in the number of continuing education programs in social work administration throughout the country. However there is little documentation available regarding demonstrations of interest and actual participation on the part of social workers in administration. In the

greater New York area, informal communication with faculty in schools of social work have indicated that a generally low registration for courses in administration at the continuing education level, has discouraged broader program development.

The objective of this project was the development of principles of program design to guide the development of a model for an overall program structure which would stimulate social workers to participate in a formal learning process. The project plan focused on the identification of educational program design elements which would link a structured sequence of courses in administrative and management practice with the ongoing learning patterns of professional social workers. The overall educational program goal, serving as the framework for the project design and development, was the increase in social work competence in administrative practice to support the delivery of social work services.

The selection of the project direction was guided by:

- a. A concern for the development of administrative competence among practicing social workers.
- b. The lack of professionally supported channels for access to ongoing learning in administration outside the social agency.
- c. The need for additional models for continuing education programs for social workers in administration.
- d. The need for information related to the assessment of interest and commitment to further learning in this area.
- e. The systemic requirement that a new continuing education program quickly demonstrate a correspondence between need and demand, to justify resource allocation and future institutional support.

Literature on continuing education in social work and other allied professions was consulted to gather background information

about educational program planning for the established professional worker. Reports from the medical and nursing fields stress the critical nature of ongoing learning in the professional growth process in response to the changing demands of work and the introduction of new technologies. Analyses of population characteristics and receptivity to continuing education programming have provided a basis for looking at factors related to adult learning styles and preferences.²

Social work literature has not dealt extensively with administrative practice as a focus for postgraduate education. However, the increasing concern with the performance of administrative personnel in social agencies has prompted reporting of activities on a number of educational fronts. At the postgraduate level, contractual agreements between educational institutions and agencies predominate. The target populations are carefully selected, and participation at certain administrative levels may be mandatory. Reports on these collaborative learning experiences cite common problems of integrating work experience with new learning; relating course content to job responsibilities; and dealing with organizational constraints in the application of new knowledge and skills.³ This approach permits a clear educational focus, while limiting planning decisions to the context of agency-defined needs. The selection of participating staff groups within a local or regional organizational structure insures a measure of conformity of experience and goals among registrants as well as promoting an adequate level of participation. The challenges of effective program design and implementation are somewhat different from those of the open enrollment program which must both solicit and respond to the needs of a diverse group.

The issue of low participation in open registration programs in continuing education is one confronted by all professions. It has been documented that only a small fraction of the practicing body of professionals ever return for further formal training unless it is mandated by legislative action.⁴ The question whether the potential participant in a continuing education program must be convinced of need through organizational pressures, or whether an increase in program availability, appropriate communication, and informational channels, would in themselves stimulate awareness of need and promote educational involvement, was a key concern underlying the project design. The implied passivity of the participant who responds only to organizational or legal pressures, presents an image of the professional social worker which is antagonistic to the concepts of adult self-direction and a mature approach toward learning. The development of new access routes and encouragement of educational risk-taking, implies a more complicated relationship between participant and program, based on information, dialogue and choice. The person who seeks further educational experiences must be accompanied by a sense of making an active decision to become involved, in order for there to be a commitment of learning energies.

The planning strategy adapted the basic principles of adult learning to the specific characteristics of the target population of social workers practicing administration. The project responsibility was to create a design which would stimulate the individual's perception of his or her own need for self-development in an expanding professional arena. The assumption that awareness of need may be only one of many factors contributing to the decision to participate,

led to the exploration of the constraints and opportunities within the professional, organizational and personal arenas which might be considered influential forces.

The theory of adult learning or andragogy, highlighted the importance of timing new learning to coincide with the individual and societal expectations of adult role performance.⁵ The challenge lay in sound analysis of the experiences and pressures social workers encounter in social welfare management. Sociological perspectives provided an understanding of the influences shaping the professional and organizational identification of social work personnel as they move into middle management positions.⁶ The structure and demands of organizational life have a critical impact on professional socialization processes. An awareness of the need for the development of a more cohesive peer group and professional support system provided direction for planning and educational program environment. The exploration and expansion of these areas, covered in Chapters II and III of this report became the theoretical background for the conceptualization of the dynamics of the interface between the target population and the educational programs.

The theoretical framework played a significant part in the determination of the methodology and approach toward planning. Inquiry and interpretation of data followed the direction established by the theoretical guidelines, and led to an expanded concept of program design, well beyond the several courses originally planned. Program climate, environment, and such issues as collegial relationships, communication, space, timing of courses and feedback systems, grew in importance as the planning progressed.

Along with a review of the literature for the development of a theoretical base for the principles of design, discussions were held with educators in management and administration for further clarification of issues relevant to professional education in administration. Experiences in curriculum planning, interprofessional teaching and learning were sought.⁷

During the fall and winter of 1977 the writer participated in the deliberations of the new NASW Committee on Administration.⁸ These meetings provided a forum for exploration of attitudes, values and biases of those both in and outside the profession toward social work administration.

A number of key themes emerged through this series of informal discussions:

- a. Social workers often have difficulty being in positions of leadership and authority where they carry the major decision-making responsibility. Their training prepares them for shared decision-making through group process. When they move into administrative positions this approach may become counterproductive as a single operational style.
- b. Practice in decision-making under pressure among professional peers in an administrative arena may be important for future work in administration. There was some speculation regarding the importance of building a sense of entitlement to leadership roles in administrative decision-making at the graduate level where the sense of professional worth and socialization builds support for future work roles.
- c. Decisions involving resource allocation which appear to pit service delivery against issues of organization maintenance often poses problems for the social worker who has been trained to be the client's advocate in negotiating services from the social welfare system.
- d. Two divergent points of view regarding the impact of management technology on service delivery, were presented. The first was that the usage of management technology is neutral, and the processes are servants to policy

implementation. Therefore management knowledge and skills can be learned in any educational setting and may be applied in any arena without a specialized orientation.⁹ The second point of view reflected a concern with the impact of administrative and management practice, presupposing the existence of intended and unintended consequences relating to delivery of services. The social worker already trained in assessing the impact of environmental systems on clients, brings a heightened awareness of critical service-related issues. Therefore a social work educational setting provides a forum for discussion as well as supporting the legitimacy of the issues raised.¹⁰

These themes provided a background of observations and attitudes reflecting social worker images in the working community. They were important indicators of the need for further discussion with social workers in administrative practice before the development of an educational philosophy and the construction of principles of program design.

Members of the Hunter faculty were also consulted for their perspectives on the theoretical background, course content, style of presentation, program design and evaluation. Valuable insights were gained which helped to provide a focus differentiating educational program design at the post-master's level from a design for students at the master's level.¹¹ These differences are discussed in Chapter III under adult learning and teaching areas.

The project proposal was submitted and approved in the early spring of 1978. The timeliness of the project implementation seemed particularly appropriate in terms of movement in the broad field of social welfare services as well as in terms of the institutional supports available through the Hunter College School of Social Work.

The following factors were influential in the external environment:

- a. The introduction of new information systems, planning processes and financial reporting mechanisms from other fields, into the social welfare sector.

- b. Pressures from public and private regulatory agencies for administrative accountability within social service organizations coupled with the threat of dwindling resource allocations.
- c. The influx of management personnel from other fields to the field of social welfare, challenging social work leadership in program design and implementation.
- d. A tight job market forcing social workers to acquire knowledge and skills prior to a move to a new position.
- e. The need to put increasing emphasis on the development of formal learning resources outside degree programs due to the specialized needs of the mobile professional worker and the complexity of new technologies.
- f. The paucity of social work administration programs for the practitioner in the New York City area.
- g. A lack of documentation of underlying assumptions guiding the planning of existent postgraduate programs in social work administration.

The internal environment was supportive of the project focus and the program implementation at this time. The following factors contributed to this determination:

- a. The climate was positive within the Hunter College School of Social Work. There was already an administration major within the master's program, and a manifest concern for the organizational environment within which social work is practiced.
- b. Dean Harold Lewis encouraged the development of the program and provided both support to the planning process of the project as well as support for the program needs of space and initial publicity resources.
- c. A number of faculty members at the School of Social Work were called upon as consultants and gave generously of their time.

The factors contributing to the timeliness of launching the new program in the fall of 1978 forced constraints on the project planning and implementation process. The need for specific areas of knowledge and data to integrate with the principles of program design well

before September of 1978, required careful delineation of the project boundaries and expectations. The project design was limited by:

- a. The lack of codified knowledge and experience in continuing education program planning for social workers in administration.
- b. The relatively limited applications of adult learning principles to continuing education for social workers.
- c. The lack of information concerning attitudes, characteristics, and activities of social workers practicing administration.
- d. The difficulty in identifying a target population from which to draw a large sample to obtain the desired information.
- e. The lack of theoretical or practical literature dealing with middle management work as a professional issue within a social work context.

The description of the project design and methodology which follows explores the parameters of these limits and describes the project activities which were undertaken to overcome them.

The Project Design

Before discussion of the project design it is necessary to clarify different levels of goals and objectives and their relationship to immediate and more distant time frames. While the overall, long range program goals fell outside the parameters of the project, they were instrumental in the selection of the focus and methodology.

The long range goals of the program were to enhance the delivery of social services to clients of social service organizations through increasing the competence of the administrators providing supportive resources. The second goal was to increase social work professional accountability for administrative practice within the

organizational setting. The third major goal was to demonstrate the validity of social work based, continuing education, as a viable route for ongoing formal learning in administration and management areas.

The objectives of the project were related to a more modest time frame. They encompassed the program design, presentation, and early impact on the target population prior to actual course involvement. The relationship between the project and the overall program is demonstrated by the following five project objectives:

1. To stimulate an awareness of need for acquisition of further knowledge and skills in different areas of administrative practice.
2. To provide practicing social workers with a formal educational option and specific direction for ongoing learning in this area in a setting which recognizes the prerequisites for adult learning.
3. To provide informal as well as formal opportunities for expansion of knowledge and understanding of administrative roles and functions within organizational settings.
4. To design a continuing education program which incorporates personal, professional and organizationally-based issues related to the learning and practice of social work administration.
5. To demonstrate that participation in courses, future commitment to participate, and general interest may be stimulated by intentional program design, which includes a constellation of areas beyond the selection of specific course content, such as the program climate and environment, and internal functioning.

The project sought to achieve these objectives through:

1. Inquiry, identification and analysis of specific characteristics of the target population and the interpretation in programmatic terms of attitudinal and behavioral factors related to participation.
2. The development and utilization of a series of principles of program design which provided a structured basis for program decision-making, planning, implementation and evaluation.

3. The assessment of the interfaces where potential participants come into contact with the program or its representatives to promote communication channels that emphasize collegial relationships.
4. The evaluation of the overall effect of the program to determine whether intentional program design guided by specific principles relating to the needs of the target group provides impetus to participation.

The tasks of the project included work in the following areas:

1. Information Gathering:

- a. Identification of program areas where planning decisions could be affected by increased knowledge about the target population.
- b. The development of a conceptual framework and description of the social worker in a middle management position, including contextual stresses of the organizational setting and the professional identity of the social work administrator.
- c. The design of an instrument and selection of an approach for collecting descriptive information about the experience, attitudes and behavior of a sample of the target population in areas related to ongoing learning in administration.

The information gathering stage was an important part of the project.

There was relatively little material available in a usable form to develop a full picture of the social worker in middle management.

The collection and interpretation of theoretical and descriptive data provided a perspective on this aspect of professional practice.

2. Identification of practical linkages underlying the selection of principles for program design:

- a. The structure of the program design process was analyzed. The following tentative areas were isolated and a preliminary assumption was made that the principles of design should address the options available in each of these areas:
 - Program philosophy
 - Program credibility in academic and work worlds
 - Program climate and learning atmosphere

- Content
 - Curriculum integration
 - Faculty selection
 - Student selection
- b. The development of a theoretical base was necessary for identification of the programmatic prerequisites for adult learning to take place within a continuing education setting.
 - c. The development of the linkages and relationship among the theoretical perspectives on adult learning, the characteristics of the target population and the knowledge and skill areas encompassed within the practice of administration in social work.
3. The formalization of a set of principles for design which served to guide decision-making for the overall program development.
 4. The development of a means of beginning to evaluate the principles as they were operationalized within the post-master's program. The focus of the evaluation was in terms of:
 - a. The interest generated by the announcement of the program.
 - b. The actual level of participation achieved in the first semester of offerings.
 - c. The identification of program elements which had some effect on the decision to enroll in the program.

Plan for Project Implementation

The project had four distinct phases of activity.

	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
<u>Planning</u>	Sept.-----Aug.		
<u>Operation</u>		Sept.---Oct.	
<u>Evaluation</u>		Sept.-----Feb.	
<u>Analysis</u>			Feb.-----Apr.

The planning phase encompassed the background development of a theoretical base for the project, instrument conceptualization and design, identification of the sample, interviews, analysis of data, utilization of the theoretical and descriptive material in the definition of principles of program design, application of the principles to the development of a post-master's program in social work administration, and finally, the development of a program announcement. The planning phase ended with the mailing of the program brochure, scheduled for August 1978.

Project operation was scheduled to begin immediately following the distribution of the program announcement. The duration of the operations phase of the project lasted from the point of brochure contact with the members of the target population, through the first session of the courses in mid-October.

The evaluation phase began at the point when brochures were first mailed out to the target population. It was scheduled to end at the beginning of the first class of the fall semester following the distribution and collection of the Course Participant Questionnaire. The activities of the evaluation phase were focused on:

- (a) the documentation of the impact of the program as a whole, and
- (b) the impact of the separate program elements on the behavior of those members of the target population who emerged as course participants or interested non-participants.

The final phase of the project encompassed the analysis of the project activities, assessment of the impacts of the program design components on target population interest and participation, and discussion of implications for future planning and replication. The

analysis phase was scheduled to take place during the months of February through April 1979. Completion of the final report was anticipated for September 1979.

Personnel Needs

The planning phase of the project required full time attention and commitment of the project coordinator. Throughout the project operational phase the coordinator was responsible for background research on alternative program structures, the development of principles of program design, their application in the program planning process, the content and style of the program brochure, and the monitoring of the operations and evaluative activities.

Professor Harold Weissman served as the Director of the post-graduate program. His responsibilities included the establishment and maintenance of relationships and resource planning within the Hunter College School of Social Work, final decision-making responsibility regarding faculty and program implementation, and development of a program advisory committee from the community at large.

During the operational phase of the project, a second year social work student, Ms. Rosemarie Oliphant, joined the staff as program assistant. She became the primary resource for the monitoring and recording of program contacts and inquiries. Her availability to prospective participants was instrumental in creating and maintaining ongoing communication channels for the program at a substantive level through offering guidance and direction. She worked closely with the project coordinator and the Director. She also carried significant other responsibilities related to registration processes, communication

with faculty members, and conceptualization of regular staff liaison roles for ongoing course monitoring. Secretarial assistance became available during registration phase.

The program was operated under a dual auspice. The Hunter College School of Social Work supplied the educational sponsorship providing credibility, professional continuity and support resources. The new Center for the Study of Social Administration, under the Directorship of Professor Weissman provided the link to the practice community. No turf problems were anticipated at this level because of the working links between the two organizations and the as yet flexible boundaries of the Center.

The postgraduate program was physically situated within the Hunter College School of Social Work. In many ways its operation paralleled that of the existing post-master's program in advanced clinical social work.¹² While in many respects the two programs were complimentary, there was also a potential for competition for the same students. Social workers who have been in the field for a number of years working in an organizational setting, often carry responsibility in both clinical and administrative areas within their agencies. Observation over time of the two student groups will reveal whether cooperative planning of crossover registration and reciprocity of some kind is indicated to promote overall continuity of the values and philosophy of the institutional auspice.

A major planning concern was the structuring and description of the courses in a manner that encouraged an appropriate self-selection process. The goal was for participants to select courses related to their past experience and current practice level. The brochure

was expected to indicate the expectations of the program for the participants' active involvement in class discussions and projects, and to deter those who envisioned a passive role.

It was anticipated that the announcement of the program would draw a group of students of diverse levels of experience and sophistication. The principles of design were to incorporate the concept of flexibility within each course, allowing for considerable adaptation. This places a major responsibility on the faculty for making a quick initial assessment of the class group during the first session of a course. If modifications were indicated, they would have to be made at this point. A new contract could be developed between the instructor and the class members based on adaptation of the course outline to student needs. Such changes would have to be modest if comparability were to be expected among courses in successive semesters. Furthermore, if the design of a certificate program as part of the overall continuing education program were to be instituted, separate offerings of the same course should not vary beyond a certain amount. The faculty and program administrators would have to work closely to maintain an acceptable level of content for each course.

Any continuing education program which attempts to have students incorporate new knowledge and skills for immediate practical application must deal with the issue of the constraints of the real work setting.

If students were led to develop unrealistic expectations or timetables regarding the introduction of change, frustration could result, leading to animosity toward the program from both participants and their agency executives. This would create a hostile external

environment for the program which would be detrimental to future enrollment and agency cooperation. Care has to be taken to insure that there will be positive linkages and support among local social agencies, as the workers within the agencies are the primary resource for the program's survival. There are different ways to build in support and understanding of the program on the part of community agencies and their collaborators or contributors to program design. They may participate on formal committees, task forces or as faculty members. Some courses could be structured to include a contract between the staff participating in the program and the executive, relating to work on a particular agency problem. Whatever links are developed, have to deal with the politics of agency change processes and sources of resistance to change. In the final analysis, students must develop an awareness of strategies which will assist them in using their new skills even in constricted settings which do not foster innovation and change.

Methodology

The project design included a focus on gathering information from social workers in administration regarding the professional and work-oriented issues with which they were confronted in their operational roles. The process of identifying and selecting a sample is discussed first.

Identification of the Target Population

The diversity of titles, functions, responsibilities and fields of practice within the social welfare sector made the definition

of a target population a difficult task. There was no recognized subgroup of social workers in administration which spanned the entire professional field. The new journals focusing on issues in social work administration have begun to highlight the common professional concerns of this amorphous ever-shifting group. However as yet there is no centralized listing or resource for names readily available.

An early step in the planning process was the identification of clear administrative job categories which would be applicable across agency and practice field lines. This was intended to provide a conceptual guide for the definition of the target population within the larger universe of social workers. A recent study conducted at the University of Washington provided a useful approach for separating social work jobs with administrative responsibilities into categories. Through an analysis of daily activities of a group of 90 managers during a sample week, five levels of administrative or management responsibility were identified. While many activities and tasks were mentioned at all levels, the focus of concern and amount of time spent on them differed significantly from level to level.¹³ The hierarchy of job levels was defined in terms of the criterion of distance from direct service delivery.¹⁴

The categories outlined in the Washington study are as follows:

1. First line supervisors--those who directly supervise workers or counselors.
2. Second line supervisors--those who are responsible for overseeing and coordinating the work of several supervisory units, all of which are in a single department.
3. Department or project head--those who are responsible for administering an entire department, division or project.

4. Administrative support staff--those who are responsible for providing supportive services to staff who are administering programs directly.
5. Executive or assistant executive director--those who have overall management responsibility for an entire agency or a major operating office or division of a large organization.¹⁵

The only adaptation made in the definitions for use in this study was the omission of the executive director position from subgroup number five, since the program was intended for middle managers. It is worth noting that some individuals at department head level had a breadth of responsibility which far exceeded that of some agency executives. However the fact that they were still responsible to a higher level of management within their agencies still put them within the middle management grouping.

The Selection of the Sample

The goal of the sample selection process was to achieve a breadth of responses from practicing social work administrators to provide insight and direction for the development of program design principles. Since a randomized selection of the sample would have required considerable prior work in identifying the target population of social workers in administration, it was determined that the goal of promoting a diversity of response would be served by a purposive, deliberate, systematic process of selection of a non-random nature.

The process of selecting a sample started with the identification of 50 MSW social workers in administrative positions in social agencies within the greater New York City area.¹⁶ The names collected were initially divided into primary groupings by administrative level. Next they were subdivided into fields of practice. A further notation

was made about agency auspice, size and source of funding. The decision to include these areas was based on the assumption that the organizational setting may affect the perceptions of social work administrators toward their roles, functions, educational needs and career goals.

The two variables of ethnicity and sex were handled somewhat differently. The overwhelming majority of the group of 50 were white and female. Since representation of minority and male members was desired, whenever possible members of these subgroups were selected for the final sample of 30.

Each member of the sample was contacted by telephone in order to determine willingness to be involved in the planning stages of the new postgraduate program. The time commitment necessary for participation in the information gathering process was discussed. Only one member of the originally selected sample refused to participate. Another person holding a similar position in the same agency was selected in his place.

The small purposive sample and the breadth of areas for exploration gave a potential for a wide spread of responses. However, linkages and correlations could only be of the most tentative sort, and could really be considered only clues to be assessed at some later date by a larger study.

Instrument Development and Data Collection

The focus for the instrument design evolved out of the concern that personal, professional or organizational issues could impede or

promote participation in formal learning for administrative practice. Programmatic elements could also have a discouraging or encouraging effect. If the relevant issues could be identified, they could form a basis for the development of principles of program design to guide program planning and decision-making.

The exploration of the theoretical background for the project discussed in Chapters II and III raised some central themes which contributed to the development of the framework for the questionnaire.

- a. Although many social workers are involved in administrative work their professional socialization and status-related identification with clinical modalities, might inhibit them from seeking out postgraduate training in administration.
- b. The stress of a move into an administrative position with new expectations, new demands and possible isolation from peers might have an impact on participation.
- c. Recent work analyzing women's career patterns in the professions has revealed a variety of impediments to career rise. It was anticipated that the women in social work administration would have experienced some difficulties in their career paths, and that this might be reflected in their perceptions of the value of formal education in administration and management areas.

The areas covered in the questionnaire were selected to provide further insight into these themes, and to promote a deeper understanding of the attitudes and experiences conducive to participation in continuing education in administration.

1. Educational background and present work situation:

- year MSW was granted and area of specialization.
- numbers and categories of employees under supervisory responsibility.
- year assumed present job responsibilities.

2. Perceptions of job mobility and related skills:

- description of tasks and activities of the job.
- what skills, experiences or personal characteristics contributed to getting the present job.

- what were the difficult aspects of transition to the present job.
- what skills are key in fulfilling present job.

3. Identification of individual learning styles:

- formal and informal learning resources chosen.
- changes in agency operations necessitating new management skills.
- existence of agency resources to assist in acquisition of new skills.

4. Attitudes toward social work administration and professional identification:

- past and current involvement with direct practice.
- shifts in identity as social worker related to career path.

5. Factors influencing decision-making regarding participation:

- relationship of career development to formal education in administration.
- obstacles to participation as seen by individual.
- identification of skills and knowledge necessary for social workers in middle management positions.
- program style, composition of learning group, and program climate.

A trial questionnaire was distributed at a conference on career opportunities. It was evident from the 20 copies which were returned to the writer that the nature of the questions required a different format to obtain the most useful response. The form was changed to an interview guide to allow greater flexibility in the presentation of questions and encouragement of responses. All the interviews were personally administered by the writer. The interview guide consisted of 11 pages, of which the face sheet and page 10 were to be filled out by the respondent. The writer made notes on the remaining pages during the interviews. The choice of an interview schedule requiring face to face contact gave rise to a more time consuming process of gathering

information and codifying the responses. However it was considered necessary to encourage more thoughtful consideration of the questions asked.

Data Analysis

The information from the questionnaires was coded manually by the writer. Classification of responses evolved from analysis and grouping of items. The description of job tasks and activities were categorized according to an adaptation of 14 administrative functions developed by Patti.¹⁷

1. Planning

- Determining goals and objectives for agency or unit.
- Setting up new programs, reorganizing departments and job descriptions.
- Scheduling and delegating work flow, timetables and procedures.
- Defining needs and social issues, writing proposals.

2. Fiscal Planning

- Budget design, development, planning and allocating resources.
- Budget adaptation and reorganization in response to changed mandates.
- Responding to budgets prepared elsewhere.
- Monitoring fiscal expenditures.

3. Controlling

- Responsibility for functioning and activities of work group(s).
- Monitoring work flow for quality and quantity, and compliance.
- Designing reporting mechanisms, collecting and interpreting statistics.
- Stimulating, receiving and interpreting feedback.
- Preparation of reports, participation in staff meetings.

4. Supervising

- Explaining clinical and administrative assignments related to improving job performance of subordinates, supervisees or teams.
- Working with subordinates or supervisees regarding procedures or disciplinary action.

5. Training

- Designing and/or implementing staff training for subordinates.

6. Consulting

- Acting to improve some aspect of work, conducted with another department in the agency or outside.

7. Staffing

- Maintaining and building the effectiveness of the agency's staff; includes recruiting, interviewing and selecting staff.
- Overseeing staff relations, insuring backup support for jobs, responding to internal personnel issues.

8. Evaluating

- Assessing individual staff or program performance.
- Evaluation research on program effectiveness or impact.
- Recommending program changes based on research.

9. Coordinating

- Exchanging information with persons or units within the agency, other than subordinates or superiors, or outside the agency, in order to relate or adjust programs.
- Developing interdepartmental reports or changes in procedures to relate to other programs.

10. Negotiating

- ". . . conferring, bargaining or discussing with a view to reaching an agreement . . . " ¹⁸ with an employee, client, union, funding source, related to service provision.

11. Representing

- Advancing the interests of the agency through contacts with individuals, groups or constituencies outside their organizations.

- Presenting public testimony, press contacts, public relations.
- Building liaison relationships with community groups.

12. Supplying

- Planning and carrying through the activities related to acquisition of physical support for functioning of organization or unit.

13. Direct Service

- Providing services directly to a client or group.
- Intervening on behalf of client or group to obtain services.

While this laundry list may appear tedious, it is an indication of the breadth and diversity of job tasks and functions performed by social workers in middle management. Not everyone would do everything, but the majority of those interviewed did in fact perform in many of the areas listed.

Project Evaluation: Scope and Design

In the course of planning the postgraduate program principles of design were developed and program elements were assigned to meet the following objectives.

- a. Reinforcement of the importance and legitimacy of social work administration as a special area of professional concern.
- b. Recognition and support for social work values as an integral part of education and training for administrative practice competence.
- c. Coordination and continuity of course content to build a conceptual framework for administrative knowledge and skills.
- d. Integration of opportunities to apply new learning to practical job requirements within course structure.

- e. Establishment and maintenance of a program climate fostering supportive peer relationships and opportunities for informal communication among participants, faculty and staff.
- f. Incorporation of adult learning priorities as they related to scheduling, planning and expectations of participants.

These areas of concern also provided direction for the categorization of program elements considered in the evaluation design. The evaluation was an after-only model. It undertook to answer questions in three general areas.

- 1. To what extent did the program as presented in the brochure meet the objectives of stimulating interest and encouraging participation among members of the target group?
- 2. Which of the elements of program design were influential on the decision to participate in the post-master's program in administration?
- 3. To what extent were there factors related to the program structure or design which presented obstacles to participation of members of the target group of social workers?

It is important to note at the outset that the factors entering into a decision to participate or not, or even to demonstrate interest in a postgraduate course, may not be dominated by the introduction of a new program or elements of its design. External pressures in the environment related to agency demands for new areas of competence, personal career orientation, or deferred interests in pursuing academic work may exist. These reasons, or others, could present compelling reasons for behavior leading to inquiries or a commitment to participate. In sum, the most influential aspect of the planning for the new program could be its timing in relation to other events external to itself.

There were numerous other courses in administrative areas,

outside social work educational settings, offered in New York City at the time the program was launched. The range and diversity of such resources left room for the independent assembling of a program unique to individual needs. This would reinforce the assumption that there was indeed a basis for examining the program elements contributing to the selection of this particular program, at this time, by social workers in administrative positions.

The discussion of the evaluation process begins with the most concrete area of assessment; the identification of different levels of activity generated by the program announcement. The desired outcomes of the project were a range of activities on the part of members of the target population which was presumed to be in response to the receipt of the brochure. The response, or lack of response to the brochure permitted the identification of three subgroups, each demonstrating a level of activity.

- I. Participants - those who enrolled in one or more courses.
- II. Interested non-participants - those who inquired but did not enroll.
- III. Uninterested non-participants - those who made no definable movement toward the program.

Activity Level I represented the demonstration of commitment to participate in further formal learning in administration. The visible indicator lay in the action of registering for one or more courses in the program. Registration was assumed to be the result of the decision to allocate time, intellectual energies and financial resources for a definable period of time. While much remains unknown at this early stage of program involvement, regarding the depth or continuity of individual commitment to formal learning in administration, the act of

choice was asumed to be in response to the presentation and promise of the program. It must be noted that the definition of program participation is a very restricted one. The scope of this aspect of the project evaluation ends with the opening class session.

Activity Level II represented a demonstration of interest in the program. Interest in the program was presumed to indicate an awareness of need for training on the part of the inquirer. Documentation of all activities generated by the brochure which provided some indication of movement toward the program was done based on the following observable indicators:

- a. Telephone inquiries and requests for program brochures.
- b. Drop in visits to discuss the program.
- c. Letters requesting information.
- d. Returned brochure registration form indicating a future interest but no current registration.
- e. Attendance at the program orientation meeting.

Since all inquiries were put onto an in-house mailing list, it was possible to eliminate duplication of names. This was particularly important because, due to an administrative oversight, it became necessary to include both inquiries from fall and spring semesters. The two numerical counts represent different subgroups.

Activity Level III represented a lack of movement toward the program. There were major difficulties in identifying social workers in middle management who made no response to the program announcement. Since one of the objectives of the project was to identify obstacles to participation as well as incentives it was thought necessary to include in this activity level, a group known to the writer, and therefore available for questioning. Of the original group of 30 social

workers in middle management who had participated in the planning field survey, only four enrolled in the program. This left a group of 26 who became the third group, representing no movement. There was some concern on the part of the writer that the earlier participation of this group in the planning process might have left them with the impression that their role was consultative, as opposed to that of a potential participant, and that this might have deterred enrollment. However, the fact that the four who enrolled spanned the more sophisticated administrative levels, helped to dispel this idea.

Measurement of Program Effects

The relationship of the program elements to the decision to participate was evaluated by means of a two page questionnaire. The course participants were given the questionnaire in the first session of each course. The uniform introduction was that this was an instrument to help the instructor and program staff in adapting the course to their current needs and to assist in future program planning. All the questionnaires were returned before the first class formally began.

The questionnaire consisted of four sections: educational background and work-related data, identification of factors external to the program which played a role in the decision to enroll, the identification of aspects of the program design which were influential in the decision, and personal goals in acquiring greater administrative skills.

The majority of the program design elements which were isolated for consideration in the evaluation were those readily identifiable through the brochure description. There was one important exception.

Research for the project revealed that the isolation of social workers in administration from their professional peers at parallel levels, creates problems of professional identification, peer support, and a dearth of standards against which to evaluate individual skill level and performance. Although the brochure does not specifically focus on the importance of the establishment of peer relationships as an objective of the program, this was seen as a desired outcome of participation, to be cultivated through the program design. The brochure indicated opportunities where this might take place, for example the orientation meeting, coffee hour, and classroom sharing of work experiences. The issue of the establishment of peer relationships and opportunity for self-assessment of administrative skills was expected to be a relevant factor in the decision to return to a formal group learning experience. Therefore the evaluative instrument included references to these areas under the rubric of communication and relationships.

The structure of the section of the questionnaire dealing design elements presented some problems related to the differential value of the elements selected for consideration. An attempt was made to group related elements into categories. The participants were asked to indicate a ranking from 1 (most important) to 4 (least important), among each of the four elements, category by category. There was no attempt to set priorities across the four major categories. To do this would have forced choices among such widely disparate elements that the resulting ranking would not have related to the complexity of the participant decision-making process. The variable of program cost was intentionally omitted since the variation among local continuing

education course costs was not considered significant. A list of the categories and subareas follows.

1. Sponsorship

- a. Administration taught within a social work value system.
- b. Auspice of Hunter College School of Social Work.
- c. Auspice of the Center for the Study of Social Administration.
- d. Credential consisting of a certificate.

2. Program

- a. Coordinated grouping of courses for learning core.
- b. Individual course content.
- c. Opportunity to relate new learning to work experience.
- d. Option of credential or non-credential participation.

3. Relationships

- a. Orientation night to meet staff, faculty and participants.
- b. Informal contacts with faculty.
- c. Informal contacts with social workers in administration.
- d. Chance to evaluate own skill level in relation to peers.

4. Circumstances

- a. Courses offered during the evening.
- b. Location of courses.
- c. Course length (within traditional educational semester).
- d. Trimester schedule of course offerings.

The analysis of the data included an assessment of anticipated, interdependent subareas, across category boundaries, and within categories. For example, the social work auspice, informal contacts with other participants, and chance to evaluate own skill level in relation to peers, if they were ranked high in their categories might indicate the importance, at least for this group, of the program auspice and

environment as it relates to contacts with peers. Another example would be the relationship which might be expected to appear among such areas as the credential offered, coordinated grouping of courses for learning core, course length or trimester system, indicating the importance of an academically structured or guided educational experience resembling a degree program.

While some patterns of high-ranking subareas were expected to emerge based on prior assumptions about the population, the analysis included the search for other associational patterns and configurations of responses that would give a broader picture, relating back to the principles of design as well as pointing to new areas for consideration. A profile of the participants was an anticipated outcome. Questions were included which related to the identification of different subgroupings of social workers in administration, career path junctures with education, learning goals and expectations, other motives for a return to a formal group setting for further learning. Information of this nature is useful for responsive program planning as there has been little past emphasis on this social worker population. However, the sample was small, 68 participants, representing only those who selected themselves into the program. Response patterns inevitably reveal more about this particular population at a particular point in time and place. Broader assumptions would be highly conjectural.

One might hypothesize that the programmatic elements which served as stimuli to demonstrations of interest and participation were the same, and only the effects and pressures from the outside environment or personal proclivities changed interest into a commitment to

enroll. Unfortunately the demands of the program operation constrained the data gathering which might have taken place at the point of inquiry regarding obstacles to participation. There was a further concern that an immediate follow-up demanding specific reasons why an individual chose not to enroll, might mistakenly project undue anxiety about program enrollment. However any comments or observations made casually by the members of this group at the time of inquiry, were recorded. The route taken to obtain information from the interested non-participants group was the sending of a very short follow-up questionnaire, with two questions: why they didn't enroll in the fall semester, and whether they would be interested in a summer session.

The questionnaire sent to the uninterested non-participants, (the 26 participants in the field survey), related to their prior involvement in the planning process as well as their reactions to the finished program design as reflected in the brochure. The following four questions were asked.

1. Did they think their concerns were reflected in the program design?
2. Was the program appropriate for persons at their level of responsibility?
3. Were they able to identify any elements of the program design or structure which would deter them from participation?
4. Would they recommend the program to their staff?

The choice of questions demonstrated a concern for their perception of the program as co-planners, as well as potential participants.

The project evaluation process sought to document the unanticipated as well as the anticipated aspects of the program which promoted or deterred participation. Open-ended questions were included in

appropriate sections of each of the three questionnaires. Informal reactions to the program were collected at the time of inquiry. The writer attended the program orientation meetings and joined the first coffee hour before each course. Many informal remarks and responses to the program emerged during these more relaxed conversations.

While any data gathered in this manner was impressionistic, it added to the broad canvas of understanding the impact of the new program. It is often difficult to predict at an exploratory level, what will prove useful for future planning endeavors. It is for this reason that throughout this report we have included the full range of formal findings, observations as well as erratically obtained data.

Project Evaluation Activities Timetable

<u>August-September 1978</u>	<u>October 1978</u>	<u>November 1978</u>
-- Mail brochure.	-- Begin courses.	-- Mail uninterested planners questionnaire.
-- Collect registrations.	-- Give participant questionnaire.	-- Mail interested non-participants questionnaire to fall inquirers. (In fact, this was not done until January 1979.)
-- Collect inquiries.	-- End fall inquiries.	
-- Hold orientation.	-- Collect spring inquiries.	

Analysis of Findings and Indices of Success

Some discussion of the analysis of the findings has taken place within the earlier sections of this chapter in relation to data collection and interpretation. In this section the analysis of findings as it relates to definitions and indices of success is discussed.

In order to consider the project a success, two requirements

had to be met: the first was concerned with the level of response to the program through enrollment, the second was concerned with the relationship between the commitment to participate and the impact of the program on this decision. In order to accomplish this the program had to be assessed as a single entity and then in terms of its design components.

The key criterion for success was participation. The index of an acceptable level of participation was provided by the systemic program goal. The maintenance and continuity of the new postgraduate program related to its demonstrated ability to emerge from its first semester of operation in a state of fiscal solvency with some funds available for the second semester's planning. For this to occur there had to be a total of 65 registrants at \$150 per course. This dimension of project success had a direct impact on the program in its institutional setting, and establishing the relationship between program availability and demand. In the field of continuing education, demand provides one indicator of legitimacy.

The major resource for analysis of the relationship between the program components and outcomes was the group of social workers who became participants in the program through registration in the first six courses offered in the fall of 1978. The instrument designed for this group focused on the impact of the program as a whole and an identification of indicators which alone and in combination, provided clues to the impact of program design elements. The assessment of the impact of the program in its entirety established a framework for the consideration of the impact of its separate elements. The evaluation of the impact of the total program was attempted through

the mechanism of trying to establish the degree and kind of movement the participants had made in their decision to enroll in the program. While movement could be assessed in terms of directionality, it could not, within the parameters of this project be evaluated in terms of finite distance covered. Identification of true starting points in relation to a prior level of commitment to participate would have required a different timetable, instruments, and more knowledge of the target population.

The indicators selected for the participants' evaluation instrument did not elicit information leading to conclusive evidence, but did shed some light on the area. There were two areas of the questionnaire which related to this issue. The first focused on the participants' recent involvement in other continuing education courses related to administration. This was considered a very indirect indicator, since it documented the extent to which a prior pattern of participation in formal courses had been established, but did not relate specifically to the present or earlier starting points. The second question posed the situation that if this program had not been available, would other educational alternatives in administration have been pursued at this time. While the reliability of the responses to retrospective probing may be open to some question, given the fact that there was no feasible way to communicate with this group before their contact with the program, this approach had to suffice.

The responses to the question of prior intent provided two additional definitions of a successful impact of the program. First, if the individual had not made plans to take a course in administration and did not have a historic pattern of participation, then the

program could be said to have generated a high level of activity. In terms of the indices for overall program success, this would be considered the most valued change in behavior because it stimulated the emergence of a commitment to ongoing learning in administration. If one-third of the participant group fell into this category, then this would be considered very successful. It might also be inferred that the lack of a prior commitment, and no alternate plans to seek educational opportunities elsewhere, might indicate that the environmental influences played a lesser role and the program design itself played a greater role in the decision.

If the response was that the individual would have taken a course in administration at this time even if this program had not been offered, then no assumption could be made that a change in level of activity had been generated. However it could be asserted that the program had influenced the directionality of choice, and channeled a preexisting intention. If the person had an historic pattern of seeking continuing education in administration then it would be hard to assess whether the directionality had been influenced or whether all other options had been exhausted.

The second major dimension where criteria for success have been established relates to the demonstration of a positive relationship between the principles of design, as reflected in the program, the stimulation of participation and to a lesser extent, interest. While this is a much more difficult area in which to develop indices of success it relates directly to the premise underlying the planning process. The integration of field survey data and theory into principles of program design was based on an assessment of the professional

needs of the target population. A conceptualization of certain personal, professional, and organizational barriers that might exist and could be overcome through program structure and design led the way to further exploration. Specific components of the program design were isolated for the evaluative process. Their description appears earlier in this chapter. They can at best be considered only partial indicators of the effectiveness of the utilization of the principles guiding the program design. The objective of the analysis at this level was to introduce some order to the understanding of the impact of the program components on the decision-making process of the participant group.

The further intent of the program design as it was presented in the brochure was to attract a specific population of social workers in administration who would be able to relate course content to their work, and whose work was at a level of responsibility where this was indeed possible. Given that the project evaluation related to the impact of the program promise rather than the delivery, the criteria upon which to base the attainment of this objective, remains somewhat superficial. However initial clues might be found in the extent to which positive data was obtained in these areas of the participants' questionnaire. The first area related to the analysis of participant job level and range of responsibilities; the second, indications of an interest in having the opportunity to apply new learning to the job; and the third, a personal goal for participating which included enhancing their present job functioning.

It was an assumption of this project that a positive activity level was demonstrated when an individual responded to the receipt of

the brochure with an inquiry. However as defined by the project, a demonstration of interest stops short of a commitment to participate. Although a demonstration of interest carried a lower weight among the criteria indicating the success of the project, it was considered a valid program outcome. If the project parameters had been extended to include a longer time period, it is highly conceivable that an expression of interest manifested during one semester could well be followed by a commitment to participate in the next semester. Given the limit of the project as outlined, interest levels were included in the analysis, and some attempt was made to identify any program design elements which were linked with the decision not to enroll.

Summary

Earlier in this chapter questions to guide the direction of the evaluation process were raised. The project evaluation has utilized a number of partial measures of the larger concepts in the attempt to isolate relevant indicators of the relationship between project process, outcomes and objectives. In the project conclusions the discussion focuses on the analysis of the overall impact of the introduction of the new program, and on the extent to which the planning process contributed useful dimensions to continuing education program design in social work administration.

The project findings and analysis of issues have relevance for other educational planners in social work and related professions. Issues of changing job roles, and requirements, management and administration for the professional worker, transcend the boundaries of the separate professions.

Footnotes

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²Cyril O. Houle, The Inquiring Mind (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), pp. 54-81; see also: Beulah Rothman, "Perspectives on Learning and Teaching in Continuing Education," Journal of Education for Social Work, 9: 2 (Spring 1973), pp. 39-52; Mary Lou Somers, "Dimensions and Dynamics of Engaging the Learner," Journal of Education for Social Work, 7: 3 (Fall 1971); Thomas G. Webster, "Concepts Basic to Continuing Education," Social Work Education Reporter, 19: 3 (Sept. - Oct. 1971).

³James M. Kouses and Keith W. Irwin, "Management Training That Makes a Difference," Social Work Education Yearbook 1974-75 (Austin: University of Texas at Austin, Center for Social Work Research, 1976); see also: Lillian M. Snyder, "Continuing Education, A Medium for Improving Mental Health Services," (Report on the Continuing Education Program for Social Workers in Mental Health; NIMH Project 303, Grant 5715, MH 11479, State of Maryland, Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene Neil Solomon, M.D., Ph.D. Secretary, 1971); Eunice Shatz and Louise Frey, "Principles and Application of the Cooperative Model in Continuing Education," Journal of Education for Social Work, 13: 37 (Fall 1977).

⁴Paul Lengrand, An Introduction to Lifelong Education (Paris: UNESCO, 1970), reviewed by Louise Frey, Journal of Education for Social Work, 8: 2 (Spring 1972), p. 71.

⁵Malcolm S. Knowles, "Innovations in Teaching Styles and Approaches Based Upon Adult Learning," Journal of Education for Social Work (Spring 1972), pp. 34-38; see also: Malcolm S. Knowles, The Modern Practice of Adult Education (New York: Association Press, 1970); Eugene B. Dubois, "Program Planning for Adult Learners," (Syracuse, New York: Council on Social Work Education, April 1970); Merle Foeckler and Gerald Boynton, "Creative Adult Learning-Teaching: Who's the Engineer of this Train?" Journal of Education for Social Work, 12: 3 (Fall 1976); R.J. Havighurst and Betty Orr, Adult Education and Adult Needs, (Boston: Boston Center for the Study of Liberal Education

for Adults, 1956, p. 1; and Beulah Rothman, "Perspectives on Learning and Teaching in Continuing Education," Journal of Education for Social Work (Spring 1973).

⁶Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn, The Social Psychology of Organizations (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966), pp. 316-29; see also: Talcott Parsons, Structure and Process in Modern Societies (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1969), pp. 60-69; Herbert B. Hyman, "The Relation of the Reference Group to Judgements of Status," in Class Status and Power: A Reader in Social Stratification, ed. by Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1953).

⁷Faculty from administration and management programs consulted during early program design stages were: Professor Sidney Mailick, Doctoral Program in Mental Health Policy and Administration, Graduate School of Public Administration, New York University; Professor Leon Reinharth, then Chairman of the Department of Social Sciences, York College; Dr. Earl Zack, Director of Professional Studies Doctoral Program, Pace University, New York City; Dr. Marie Weil, then doctoral candidate, Hunter College School of Social Work, currently faculty member, University of Southern California School of Social Work.

⁸Administration Committee of the New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, chaired by Dr. Harold Weissman. The Committee is described in "Currents," 19: 7 (April 1978), p. 3.

⁹This point of view was vigorously upheld by Administration Committee member, Melvyn F. Hester, Deputy Director, Special Services for Children, Department of Social Services, Human Resources Administration, New York City.

¹⁰Participants of the Administration Committee contributing to the perspectives expressed here included committee members: Melvyn F. Hester, Deputy Director, Special Services for Children, Department of Social Services, Human Resources Administration, New York City; Joseph Wagman, Department of Mental Health, New York City; and guests: Elizabeth Lubetkin, Director of the Office of Management Planning, Human Resources Administration; David Ramage, Jr., Executive Director of the New World Foundation; Paula Hunchar, Assistant Director of Agency Relations, Greater New York Fund.

¹¹Hunter College School of Social Work faculty consulted during the planning phases were: Dean Harold Lewis, project advisor; Professor Harold Weissman, Director, Center for the Study of Social Administration; Associate Professor Mildred Mailick, Chairperson, Social Health Module, Elaine Marshak, Lecturer and Field Work Coordinator, Social Health Module; Associate Professor Jesse Smith, doctoral faculty.

¹²Phyllis Caroff, "The Post Masters Program in Clinical Social Work at the Hunter College School of Social Work, City University of New York," Clinical Social Work Journal, 5: 4 (1977), pp. 328-35.

¹³Rino J. Patti, et al., "A Survey on Management Practice and Managers in Social Welfare Agencies: A Preliminary Analysis," in Educating for Management in Social Welfare, A Report of the Social Welfare Management Curriculum Development Project, Vol. 2, Section II (conducted under the joint auspices of the School of Social Work and the Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Washington, 1976), p. 20.

¹⁴Ibid., Section IV, p. 30.

¹⁵Ibid., Section IV, p. 40.

¹⁶Field Work Coordinators from the Hunter School of Social Work were helpful in suggesting agency staff in different fields of practice, other faculty members provided additional resources, and the members of the NASW Task Force on Administration provided additional names of social work administrators.

¹⁷Patti, op. cit., Section I, pp. 12-14.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 13.

CHAPTER V

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: PLANNING PHASE

Introduction

The project implementation began with the development of an interview schedule based on assumptions drawn from the theoretical background. The planning survey focused on the attitudes, interests and biases of social workers in middle management positions toward the study and practice of social work administration. While the survey was limited in scope, the findings were instrumental in highlighting a number of key issues relating to program design (Appendix A).

The Field Survey and Agency Settings

Thirty social workers in middle management positions were contacted by telephone and asked to participate in the survey. Twenty-nine interviews were conducted by the writer, and one was held by telephone. For purposes of analysis the group was divided into five levels of middle management.

TABLE 1

Level	Number	Percent
I. First Line Supervisor	2	6
II. Second Line Supervisor	7	23
III. Department or Project Head	8	27
IV. Administrative Support Staff	8	27
V. Assistant Director	5	17
<u>Total</u>	30	100

In the selection of participants for the survey an effort was made to have approximately equal numbers of participants in each management level. The comparatively small number of first line supervisors selected for participation was intentional. It was anticipated that their experience and perspective would be least relevant to the planning process due to their primary focus on direct practice issues. They were included because they had positions which encompassed some administrative responsibility.

Social workers in middle management are very often responsible for many different levels of agency employees. The managers participating in the survey were asked to identify the different sub-groups of staff for whom they were responsible. The categories they were asked to consider were based loosely on the presumed educational background of various staff sub-groups, and two functional categories, clerical and maintenance. While these categories were scarcely mutually exclusive, they did serve to highlight the variety of supervisory responsibilities. Job title categories would have proven too cumbersome and diffuse. Four levels were selected for consideration, and two were added by the participants. The resulting six were: professionals, master's degree students in training, paraprofessionals, BA graduates, clerical and maintenance workers.

The data was analyzed in terms of the numbers of different sub-groups for whom the managers carried administrative responsibility. The data revealed that 13 percent of the survey group were not responsible administratively for any other staff. Of the 26 who carried responsibility for some staff, 92 percent were responsible for other professionals. Of these, 88 percent were responsible for other

sub-groups of staff as well. Thirty-three percent were responsible for one to two different groups. Forty-three percent were responsible for three to four different groups and 10 percent were responsible for five to six groups. There were no significant differences among the five middle management levels, other than the fact that all those (13 percent) who had no direct responsibilities for other staff were from the administrative support staff level.

Fifty percent of the respondents supervised from one to twenty staff members. Thirteen percent were responsible for 21 to 40 staff members. Close to a quarter (24 percent) supervised over 40 staff members. In terms of diversity and sheer numbers, social workers in middle level administrative positions have significant responsibilities for personnel management within their agency settings. These responsibilities extend far beyond traditional views of supervision within the profession, encompassing both union and non-union personnel, and many different levels.

The agency setting was viewed as an important factor in terms of its influence on the social worker practicing administration under its auspices.¹ Attitudes about pursuing an administrative career path and interest in pursuing formal training in this area may differ according to individual position within the agency as well as the agency's position within the broader structure of the social service arena. Three different characteristics of the social agencies were selected: auspice, focus and field of practice. In the selection of survey participants auspice was taken into consideration, with the intent of insuring that there would be adequate representation from both the public and voluntary sector. It was suspected that the

differential prospects of mobility in a time of fiscal constraint within the two sectors of the social welfare community could have an effect on the participants' views of their interest in a career direction in administration. Forty-seven percent of the managers were from public agencies and 53 percent were from voluntary agencies. The respondents were not asked to identify their agency focus. Based on their overall description of the agency and its functions, the following categories, differentiated by agency distance from actual service delivery, were applied.²

TABLE 2

Agency Focus	Managers	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Direct Service	20	67
Direct Service with Branches	3	10
Coordinative for Other Agencies	3	10
Planning, Monitoring, Evaluating for Other Agencies	<u>4</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Total</u>	30	100

The vast majority (77 percent) of the managers in the survey worked in agencies where the primary focus was the provision of direct service. The remaining 23 percent were based in agencies where the overall focus was administrative and managerial for other agencies.

Conforming to the objectives of the survey, the attempt was made to encourage a range of responses through the selection of social

workers from agencies in different fields of practice within the social welfare field.

TABLE 3

Field of Practice	Managers	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Health	7	23
Mental Health	7	23
Corrections	4	13
Child Welfare	5	17
Family Services	2	7
Social Service	<u>5</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>Total</u>	30	100

There have been a number of studies which have attempted to look at the distribution of males and females within the organizational hierarchy of the social welfare agency. Although this survey was a relatively small one, some attempt was made to insure that both men and women were included. In the sample of 30, women represented 77 percent and men represented 23 percent of the total group. This ratio of 23 to 7 while achieved accidentally, roughly reflected the national ratio of women to men within the overall field of social work.³

The analysis which follows represents an attempt to further refine the description of the sample. The small size of the sample precludes the validity of any extensive generalizations. An analysis of sex by agency level revealed that the number of women was higher at the lower four levels, and then dropped significantly at the fifth,

(assistant director) level. Of the seven men included in the survey, 29 percent were at the level of assistant director while only 13 percent

TABLE 4

Management Level	Female	Male
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Number</u>
First Line Supervisor	2	--
Second Line Supervisor	5	2
Department Head	6	2
Administrative Support Staff	7	1
Assistant Director	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Total</u>	23	7

of the women were at this level. Just under half the women were in the 30 to 39 year age group and just over half the men were in the 40 to 49 year age group. While other studies have shown a pattern where women are older than their male counterparts in similar positions, this was not repeated in this survey.

In terms of age, none of the participants were in their twenties. Seventy-seven percent were between 30 to 49, and the remaining 23 percent between 50 and 69. The participants in the survey were asked three questions relating to their social work educational background: their major area of concentration, the availability of an administration major, and the decade in which they had graduated. Of the nine respondents who had administration majors available to them, only three took advantage of this at the time. Of the 21 who majored in casework,

only three had had an administration major available. A question not asked, unfortunately, was whether any of those who had not had an administration major available would have taken the opportunity if it had been available to them. Based on past studies it may be assumed that the majority would not have selected administration as a focus for graduate studies.⁴

When the focus of graduate study was analyzed in relation to the year of graduation, it became clear that the greatest diversity occurred in the decade of the 1970s. This may have been due to one of two factors, or possibly both: (a) more options available within the graduate schools, and (b) different job opportunities and demands within the social welfare field.

Summary: Description of the Sample

Thirty social workers practicing administration in social welfare agencies were interviewed for the survey. They were selected in approximately equal proportions from both public agencies (47 percent) and voluntary agencies (53 percent). They represented six different fields of practice: health (23 percent), mental health (23 percent), corrections (13 percent), child welfare (17 percent), family services (7 percent), and social services (17 percent). Of the thirty managers, 77 percent worked in agencies where the primary agency focus was direct service. This included both direct service agencies and those with branches. The remaining 23 percent worked in agencies where the primary activities were concerned with coordinating, planning, monitoring and evaluating for other agencies.

The respondents were divided into five levels of management

responsibility based on their job descriptions. Six percent were in first line supervisory positions, 23 percent in second level supervisory positions, 27 percent in department head positions, 27 percent in administrative support and 17 percent in assistant director positions.

All except 13 percent in administrative support positions held administrative responsibilities for a variety of different staff sub-groups. Over half (53 percent) were responsible for three or more different levels of staff. In terms of sheer numbers, 50 percent of the respondents were responsible for one to 20 staff members, while 37 percent were responsible for 21 to over 50 staff members. All the participants in the survey were over 30. The majority (77 percent) were between the ages of 30 and 49. Seventy-seven percent of the group were women.

Almost half (47 percent) of the respondents had received their master's degrees between the years 1970 and 1977. Another 33 percent received their degrees in the period from 1960 through 1969. Of the total group, 70 percent majored in casework, 10 percent in administration and the remainder in group work and community organization.

Professional Identity and Direction

This part of the survey was designed to obtain information which would shed light on social work administrators' sense of professional identification. It was suspected that movement from direct practice into administration might precipitate changes in the individual's relationship to the profession.

The exploration of the participants' attitudes toward the changes

they had made in their job direction provided clues to the issues confronting social workers as they contemplate movement along an administrative career path. In terms of future program planning the findings in this section of the survey were useful in demonstrating the need for educational support for career transitions. The particular transition studied was one which moved the individual out of the primary area for which he or she had been trained, into a new area, administration.

The first question related to the number of years the respondents had been in their present position. The intention of the question was to set the stage to assess whether the length of time they had been in their current position had had any effect on their attitude toward the need to gain more formal skills in administration. From later findings it did appear that movement or anticipated movement was a factor precipitating interest. Although the responses were grouped by the five middle management levels, these categories did not prove useful in the data analysis. The absolute numbers appearing within each subcategory were too small to make useful comparisons.

TABLE 5

Number of Years in Present Position	Managers	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0 - 1	14	48
2 - 4	7	24
5 and over	<u>8</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Total</u>	29	100

Of the 14 respondents who had been in their current jobs one year or less, 10 were department heads or administrative support staff. Unfortunately this question did not distinguish among those who had moved vertically or laterally in their most recent job change.

If this amount of mobility in middle management positions exists throughout the social work field, then to plan an educational program for any particular level, or the requirements of any specific position would not represent a wise planning strategy. A more useful approach might be to plan for a range of knowledge and skills and recognize and anticipate movement both lateral and vertical.

The survey participants were asked to comment on the stressful elements of the transition to their present job. The objective was to identify particular career decision-making junctures which could be considered incentives, and those which could be considered obstacles to a further commitment to administration and program management. It was anticipated that the application of this information would guide in the planning and presentation of the program, as well as provide a focus for student recruitment. Since the program to be mounted was new, the expressions of interest in the broader community limited, it was assumed that clear sense of program direction would have to mesh with the target population's only partially defined needs. Therefore the importance of identifying both attitudinal and perceptual areas which would present incentives or barriers to seeking further formal training, became important goals of the planning survey.

There was an assumption on the part of the researcher that the level, or position, of the respondent at the time of the interview might produce some clustering of perceptions about professional identity and

sense of professional direction. Therefore the responses were initially analyzed by position. This was based on the speculation that the greater the distance from the provision of direct service, the more likely the manager's orientation would be toward administrative issues, the more settled the career direction, and the more clarity about interest in formal training. The survey participant's level proved not to be significant, at least within the context of the size of this sample.

The respondents were asked to identify the difficult aspects of the transition to the current job. After the first three interviews it became apparent because of spontaneous elaboration on the part of those being interviewed, that it was not the transition to the current job which had made the strongest impression on them, but very often earlier steps in their career path. In the succeeding interviews, therefore, the respondents were asked to identify: (a) the job change which was most difficult, and (b) the elements which composed the difficulty. Each section of the question was analyzed separately.

The first part of the question focused on the identification of the most stress provoking transition. Out of a total of 27 responses, 59 percent indicated that the movement to the present level had been most stressful. Forty-eight percent identified the shift from direct practice to a supervisory position as involving the most significant stress. Of this subgroup, 62 percent were currently in first and second level supervisory positions. The remaining 38 percent were in positions of department head or above.

One of the difficulties with the analysis of responses to this question was that certain subgroups, first and second level supervisors

particularly, had probably encountered significantly fewer job changes in their professional careers than those who had progressed to higher positions. However, since the questions relating to number of different jobs held within the profession had not been asked, there was no way of really knowing what level of comparison actually existed.

The second half of this question about stress of job transition concerned the identification of elements which contributed to the difficulties each had encountered. The respondents were encouraged through the open-ended question to discuss as many areas as they thought relevant to this issue. Of the 24 who answered the question, 67 percent identified professional relationships, which included peers and superiors. While managers in all five levels indicated that this was an important area of stress, it was more frequently cited by those in department head and administrative support staff levels. Twenty-nine percent identified interpersonal lack of communication or loneliness on leaving a group of former peers and not really finding a group of peers in their new position and 29 percent cited organizational relocation and the shift in perspective necessary, as an upsetting factor. Closely related to this latter area was the distance from clients and the lack of client contact, which was mentioned by 21 percent of the group.

Traditionally the image and the dominant educational thrust of graduate education has been toward the preparation of caseworkers. For most, the appeal of the profession, as well as its image, has rested on this singular function. Relatively few come to their professional graduate education with the expressed desire to move quickly toward administration or management roles in the social service delivery system.

Movement, once in the professional work stream, is generally from direct practice through different levels of supervision to higher administrative posts. Though formally unprepared for administration or program management, most social workers who have learned on the job are supported by their intimate knowledge of the services system, the personnel and the client groups with which their agency is working. In fact the new graduate in administration often has difficulty in securing an administrative position due to a lack of experience where this experiential knowledge would have been acquired.

Only 10 percent out of the 30 managers in the sample had majored in administration, and 70 percent had majored in casework. However, all were now in administrative roles within their agencies. In order to look at their sense of professional identification and career direction we asked about their current involvement in direct practice and their view of their future involvement.

TABLE 6

Involvement in Direct Practice	Managers	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Currently Involved	13	43
Not Currently Involved But Plan To Be In the Future	4	13
Not Currently Involved and Do Not Plan To Be In the Future	11	37
Never Have Been Involved and Do Not Plan To Be In the Future	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Total</u>	30	100

The 43 percent currently involved in direct practice included all nine of the first and second level supervisors and only four of the 21 managers in the next three levels (department head, administrative support staff, and assistant director). Of the 28 who responded to a question about career direction asked later in the survey, 25 percent planned to combine administration and clinical work.

The question of professional identification and its role as a possible source of resistance to engagement in formal training in administration was approached in the survey from many different angles. It was thought that one indicator of a strain between clinical and administrative areas of the profession might be seen in the extent to which people identified themselves as social workers, and whether their self-identification as social workers had changed over time. Of course many other variables may enter into this very subjective process of using, changing and labeling one's professional stance.

TABLE 7

Professional Identification as Social Worker	Manager	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Always	19	63
Sometimes	4	13
Increasingly	2	7
Rarely	4	13
Never	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Total</u>	30	99

Within different management levels the proportion of respondents who identified themselves as social workers showed a slight, but not always consistent tendency to vary inversely with the increase in administrative responsibility.

At the first and second supervisory levels all respondents always identified themselves as social workers. Among the department heads, 63 percent always identified themselves, among administrative support staff, 38 percent identified themselves and among assistant directors, 40 percent.

A number of possible variables which might contribute to the decision whether or not to identify oneself as a social worker, emerged unsolicited from the interviews. The first was the setting and the role of the social workers within the setting. One respondent who had worked in a large urban hospital indicated that a gradual recognition over the years of the fact that social workers really were the only professional group in that setting which consistently kept the client's whole environmental context in view, led her to increasingly identify herself as a social worker. Several respondents who had received their professional education outside New York City indicated that their positive attitudes toward identifying themselves as social workers stemmed from the climate which had existed during their years in graduate school but not the climate in New York City. Among those who identified themselves as social workers sometimes or rarely, there were some observations that it was a political decision relating to whether one's professional or administrative status would be more useful in a particular situation.

In an attempt to begin to assess whether there was any

correlation between a diminution of social work identification with an increase in linkages with other professional groups or subgroups, the question was specifically asked about new memberships in management organizations, or participation in conferences with a management perspective.

TABLE 8

Personal and Professional Involvement Relating to New Management Interests	Managers (N = 28)	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Personal Associations	6	22
Professional Memberships	6	22
Management Conferences	5	18
Field of Practice Conferences with Focus on Management Issues	7	25
Community Activities Related to Management	5	18
No New Areas of Involvement	7	25

Of the total number responding to this question, 75 percent identified at least one new area of involvement. The assumption on the part of the researcher was that this indicated a potential willingness on the part of at least this group to broaden their social work identification to include linkages beyond their earlier graduate school based case-work identification.

The participants in the survey were asked to identify the

direction in which they anticipated their career would move within the social work profession.

TABLE 9

Career Direction: Primary Focus	Managers (N = 28)	
	Number	Percent
Greater Administration	11	39
Same Level of Administration	3	11
Greater Clinical	3	11
Combination of Clinical and Administration	7	25
Combination of Consultation and Administration	2	7
Professional Education--Teaching	6	21
Research	1	4
Politics	1	4

The responses to this question represented considerable diversity, reinforcing the impression of mobility within these job levels.

The respondents were asked what difficulties they anticipated in movement toward their career goals. Out of the total group only 21 answered this question. The paucity of responses in this area was quite unexpected. It was anticipated that considerable material would emerge which would be useful in the identification of obstacles in the external environment, and for the planning of the program. Of the 16 respondents who identified difficulties or obstacles to their movement toward their career goal, 44 percent cited the issue of a lack of formal skills (see Table 10).

TABLE 10

Anticipated Difficulties in Moving Toward Career Goal	Managers (N = 28)	
	Number	Percent
Discrimination (Age, Sex, Race, Profession)	3	14
Personal Health	1	5
Lack of Formal Skills	7	33
Limited Desirable Positions Available	2	10
National Economy	1	5
Political Problems Within Agency	2	10
Not Sure	5	24

Summary: Professional Identity and Career Direction

The social workers interviewed in the survey appeared to have a high degree of mobility. Of the 29 responding to a question about the number of years in their present position, 48 percent had been in their current position one year or less. Of the 16 who were in department head and administrative support staff positions, 63 percent had held their jobs one year or less. When asked to identify the most stressful job transition they had encountered to date, 59 percent of the 27 who answered indicated that the change in level which brought the greatest stress was the shift to the present position. Forty-eight percent identified movement from direct practice to supervision. Close to two-thirds of this subgroup (62 percent) were currently in supervisory positions at the first and second level. The remaining one-third although having experienced other job level changes indicated that the move from direct practice to supervision had proven to be the most difficult.

The respondents identified more than one source of the stress

of job transition. Out of 24, 67 percent pointed to professional relationships; 29 percent, loneliness upon leaving a peer group, and 29 percent mentioned dealing with the factors of organizational relocation. These findings are supported by the findings of Patti in a study of the transition from clinical to administrative roles.⁵

In an earlier section of this chapter it was noted that 70 percent of the sample had specialized in casework in graduate school. In response to a question about the participants' continued involvement in direct practice, 43 percent had some degree of direct involvement in practice and another 13 percent planned to do so in the future. Twenty-five percent planned to combine clinical and administrative work in the future. Of the total group, 63 percent always referred to themselves as social workers, and another seven percent were increasingly doing so. Out of 28 who responded, 75 percent identified a variety of ways in which they directed their professional interests in administrative and managerial avenues. Of the 21 who gave examples of their activities, 71 percent attended conferences where topics relating to management were discussed, 29 percent had formed new personal associations, 29 percent had joined new professional membership organizations.

When asked about their anticipated career direction, of the 28 responding, 82 percent were planning to continue in administrative areas: 39 percent expecting to move into positions of higher responsibility and 11 percent preferring to remain where they were. Still others (32 percent) were hoping to combine clinical, or consulting activities with administration. Eleven percent wanted to move in the direction of greater clinical involvement. Twenty-one percent wanted

to move into the education field. Once social workers move into administrative areas there appears to be a broadened view of opportunities for career expansion, much of it in a lateral direction.

The participants in the survey were asked what difficulties they anticipated in their movement toward their career goal. Only 21 answered this question. Of those who cited specific difficulties, 44 percent mentioned that the lack of formal skills would be an impediment to movement. Other difficulties mentioned related to age, sex, racial or professional discrimination (14 percent), political problems within the agency (10 percent), limited positions available (10 percent), and the national economy (five percent). As mentioned earlier, this was not a particularly useful one for the survey. The fact that almost half thought that a lack of formal skills would be a drawback was important, but has to be looked at in a wider context. Almost as high a percent cited external obstacles, illustrating the complexity of the question of identification of difficulties or barriers to movement. Chernesky has stressed external or structural barriers as forming particular obstacles for women in advancement within the profession.⁶ In terms of career mobility both areas must be dealt with, neither to the exclusion of the other.

Knowledge, Skills and Mobility

This section of the survey focused on the identification of the range of areas of knowledge and skills the managers in the sample thought were necessary to function successfully on their jobs. Those areas which were thought difficult to acquire through practice on the job, were of particular concern. The objective of this section was to

obtain as broad a span as possible of the dimensions of work requirements through the eyes of social workers actively engaged in the field.

In the recognition that social agencies are subject to many external pressures there was also an effort to identify aspects of agency working conditions or changes which had an effect on job functioning. For example, there was an assumption that the imposition of new regulations and new systems of accountability would have an effect on social worker perceptions of management skills necessary to perform effectively on the job.

The first question in this section sought to determine what factors the participants thought were influential in their ability to move into their present job. Two broad categories of knowledge and experience were identified even though some ambiguities are created in separating the two areas. For the purposes of this project the differentiation served a distinct purpose. Knowledge was defined as the accumulation of theoretical and conceptually relevant information and ideas, or the accumulation of information and understanding based on past exposure to a service system or network. Experience was defined as the identifiable skills of doing the tasks of the job. Of course, the skills of the profession are set within the framework of knowledge and the practice science of the field. Therefore, the distinctions made are somewhat artificial. The purpose was to begin to distinguish the respective roles of each of the two components as they were viewed by the respondents, in relation to their current position.

TABLE 11

Areas of Knowledge Considered Influential in Obtaining Current Position	Managers (N = 30)	
	Number	Percent
Specific Setting	19	63
Service Population and System	12	40
Human Behavior	8	27
Organizational Behavior	5	17
Management Processes	5	17
Needs Assessment	4	13
Social Policy Issues	3	10

All the respondents answered the question about knowledge and skills. It was open-ended and the categorizations permitted more than one response for each person. It is evident from the responses, that knowledge about the specific setting, mentioned by 63 percent, and knowledge about the service population and system, mentioned by 40 percent, were two of the most important areas for the members of the sample group. Both of these areas are intimately connected with the background experience of the respondents, and by inference, it may be assumed that they obtained their present job either within the same agency or the same service system as their previous job. Significantly fewer respondents, under 25 percent, mentioned specific knowledge related to management or organizational areas.

The second part of the question focused on areas of background experience which the respondents thought had contributed to their getting their present job. All the respondents answered this question. Despite a diversity of experiences mentioned by the group, supervision

TABLE 12

Area of Experience Considered Influential in Obtaining Current Position	Managers (N = 30)		
		Number	Percent
Supervision	17		57
Administration	17		57
Clinical Practice	7		23
Community Organization	6		20
Politics	6		20
Planning	5		17
Leadership	4		13
Teacher-training	4		13
Research	2		7
Staffing	1		3

and administration stand out as two major areas where skills had provided a significant number of the respondents with the background for their present jobs. Subsumed under the heading of politics were responses which alluded to political factors which were influential in obtaining the job. The comments ranged from, "being in the right place at the right time" and "durability on the job" to admission of more active manipulations and lobbying behind the scenes. Other personal characteristics were cited which related to use of self politically. These areas in all likelihood contributed more to individual mobility than was revealed in this survey. As one person said, "I'd be a fool to tell you how I got this job. It doesn't relate to any skill I learned in school." If the question had been asked concerning the extent to which the managers thought that political factors contributed to their success in obtaining their job, the importance of knowledge and experience might have shifted.

The few responses which did not lend themselves to categorization under this conceptual framework are noteworthy because they cut across all dimensions of the areas and categories mentioned. These were leadership and communication skills. The managers who cited leadership as an influential factor in the attainment of their jobs identified it quite clearly as a personal characteristic which they had cultivated, and which had appeared early in their lives. They denied that it was a skill acquired through a formal learning process. In later questions of the survey dealing with skills desired for increased job mobility, leadership emerged again in a different context. This time the need to acquire the skills of leadership through a formal learning process was stressed. While leadership was mentioned, it is interesting to note that none of the respondents highlighted the experience of working successfully with groups, either in a leadership capacity or as a group member. Work with groups may be subsumed under a variety of the other areas including administration, but due to the loose phrasing of the question, no further distinctions could be made.

Once people are in new jobs their activities may vary significantly from those of previous jobs. The skills for which they were hired may or may not turn out to be those that they actually use. The data which follows relates to identification of the activities of the job and the analytic and interventive skills viewed as useful in the performance of the job. As mentioned in an earlier section, the classification of activities of the job was adapted from Patti.⁷ Two changes were made. The categories of Information Processing and Extra Curricular in the Patti design were eliminated and the categories of Training and Consulting were added. In contrast to Patti's survey, here

we did not attempt to have the respondents develop a priority listing of activities, rather the stress was on the range and diversity of involvement which occurred at different levels. Each of the respondents described the tasks and components of their jobs. These were then later placed in the appropriate categories.

Although tabulations were routinely made by position of the respondents, the small size of the sample precluded any significance being ascribed to the limited evidence of clustering which may have occurred. In general, the diversity of activities recognized at all levels provided support to the conceptualization of the generic activities of the middle manager despite variations in level and job emphasis. Each manager mentioned at least three activities. Ten percent mentioned only three, 37 percent mentioned four, 27 percent mentioned five, 23 percent mentioned six, and three percent mentioned seven. A total of 87 percent mentioned four to six different activities.

TABLE 13

Activities of the Job	Managers (N = 30)	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Planning	23	77
Supervising	21	70
Controlling	20	67
Representing	16	53
Coordinating	14	47
Clinical	14	47
Staffing	8	27
Training	7	23
Fiscal Planning	6	20
Negotiating	6	20
Consulting	5	17
Evaluating	3	10

The next area to be considered was the identification of the skills which had proven key in the actual fulfillment of job responsibilities. The objective of the listing of skills was to gain a clearer understanding of the relationship of these skills to job activities in order that course content could be selected which would relate to actual skills required for work in middle management positions.

The data obtained from this question spanned categories of knowledge gained from school, work experience, and skill in interventive action. These areas were broadly categorized into intellectual skills and interventive behavior. The participants were encouraged to list as many skills as they thought were relevant.

TABLE 14

Intellectual Skills Necessary to Fulfill Current Job Requirements	Managers (N = 30)	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Human Relations	19	63
Organizational Dynamics	15	50
Program Design	8	27
Interorganizational Dynamics	4	13
Statistical Analysis	3	10
Management Technology	2	7
Policy Analysis	1	3
Administrative Models	1	3

Interventive skills useful to managers within their present position spanned many of the same areas mentioned by the group earlier in relation to experience which had contributed skills which were influential in their obtaining their current position. Responses to both

areas stressed supervisory skills as particularly relevant to at least 50 percent of the entire sample. There were some major shifts in emphasis, however. The area of clinical practice, important to 23 percent of the managers in obtaining their present position, was only mentioned by seven percent of the group as important in fulfilling the job. A new category emerged in relation to the fulfillment of the job requirements. Fifty percent cited interprofessional collaboration as a necessary skill.

TABLE 15

Interventive Skills Necessary to Fulfill Current Job Requirements	Managers (N = 30)	
	Number	Percent
Interprofessional Collaboration	15	50
Supervision	14	47
Personnel Management	13	43
Program Management	11	37
Teaching and Training	8	27
Community Organization	8	27
Clinical	2	7

It was assumed that the managers came to their jobs with certain skills and acquired certain others in the process of fulfilling demands of daily work. However it was suspected that there were some skills which were harder than others to learn in this manner. The managers were asked to identify those skills which had been the most difficult to acquire on the job, and to indicate which, if any, of these continued to pose difficulty. In many instances there was an overlap with the two earlier questions, so the responses were categorized in a

similar manner: intellectual skills and interventive behavior. Skills in management technology were viewed as the most difficult (40 percent) to acquire on the job. Organizational and interorganizational dynamics, developing budgets, and professional self-assessment, were also mentioned.

This last category was a surprise to the writer. It related to the concern that no one helped the managers evaluate how they were progressing in terms of their management skills, their career direction or their options for professional development. The only evaluation which the managers received related to the completion of tasks of the job not the individual manager's professional growth.

TABLE 16

Intellectual Skills	Managers (N = 30)	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Management Technology	12	40
Organizational and Inter- organizational Dynamics	10	33
Budget Development	6	20
Professional Self Assessment	5	17
Policy Design	3	10
Development of Administrative Models for Practice	3	10
Human Relations in the Organization	2	7

The broad area of interventive behavior was also of concern to the managers in the sample. Ten different categories were mentioned by

29 respondents. The most significant concern related to a loosely defined grouping of elements which emerged under the rubric of the professional use of self. This included such areas as role in staff relations, dealing with authority, restructuring the job for individual challenge and needs, and developing authority with staff. This category became a catch all for a wide variety of concerns, in doing so capturing some of the less tangible difficulties of functioning effectively in a middle management position.

Another difficulty brought out by several respondents related to the fact that the acquisition of management skills was less difficult to acquire than finding a way to put them into practice given agency constraints.

TABLE 17

Interventive Behavior: Skills Not Readily Acquired on the Job	Managers (N = 29)	
	Number	Percent
Professional Use of Self	11	38
Personnel Management	7	24
Interprofessional Relationships	7	24
Political Skills	6	21
Supervisory Skills	5	17
Interorganizational Skills	3	10
Labor Negotiations	3	10
Clinical Skills	2	7
Program Management	2	7
Community Organization	2	7

Almost every category which had been mentioned earlier was included in this grouping, indicating that there was differing availability of

resources within different settings.

The use of skills and the need to acquire new ones is related to the requirements of a particular job and agency setting. If there are changes in the agency, then there may be new expectations of a manager's performance. The managers in the sample were asked an open-ended question about changes in their agencies which they thought affected their functioning. Out of the group of 30, six did not answer the question and another four decided they were too new on the job. The following changes were cited by the remaining 20: new systems and the introduction of management experts (55 percent), new agency priorities (25 percent), staff turnover (20 percent), and changes in agency leadership (10 percent).

The respondents were then asked to pinpoint the effects of the changes they had identified on their job functioning. Of the entire group, only 13 decided that the question was relevant for them. Of the remaining 17, five stated that the question was not applicable, six were not clear how to evaluate the effects of agency changes, and six just did not answer the question. Those who answered, spoke about the changes bringing them greater freedom to do more sophisticated planning and work more creatively on their own terms. In our categorization of the survey analysis, this was defined as having more control over their jobs. Less control over the job was defined as having to respond to externally imposed directives and procedures. Of the 13 who responded to the question, 62 percent thought the changes in the agency would give them more control, eight percent the same amount of control, and 31 percent thought they would have less control.

The final question in this section of the survey related to perceptions of mobility. All the respondents were asked what they thought they would have to know to be promoted. It was anticipated that responses would focus on the acquisition of new skills. However the responses spanned a wide range of unanticipated variables. Out of a total of 23 who responded to the question, only 30 percent thought that they needed new skills. The skills they identified were: administrative decision-making, fund raising, marketing, and public relations. Twenty-six percent thought they would have to change their own attitude toward administration, 22 percent thought they would have to use more political skills, 13 percent thought they would have to move to another agency, and nine percent thought that an agency policy change would be necessary for a social worker to move to the next administrative level.

Summary: Knowledge, Skills and Mobility

This section of the survey dealt with social workers' perceptions of professional knowledge and skills as they relate to mobility in the field. The identification of useful areas of knowledge, skill and experience as well as anticipated educational needs formed the basis for the data collected.

All 30 social workers identified at least one area of knowledge which was influential in their obtaining their present job. Sixty-three percent indicated that background knowledge about the agency and its setting was key. Forty percent cited the importance of knowledge about the service population and the service system. In terms of theoretical knowledge, 27 percent mentioned human behavior, 17 percent cited

management processes. In terms of background experience the majority (57 percent), indicated that experience in supervision and administration provided the skills necessary for them to get their current job. Fewer (23 percent) pointed to clinical practice, and still fewer (20 percent) alluded to personal politicality within the agency.

An attempt was made to chronicle the span of activities of the various jobs. Planning emerged as the activity engaged in by the highest number (77 percent), followed by supervising (53 percent), coordinating (47 percent) and clinical work (47 percent). The skills actually used on the job were categorized into intellectual skills and interventive behavior. Intellectual skills mentioned were, human relations (63 percent), organizational dynamics (50 percent), program design (27 percent). Interventive skills receiving special emphasis were: interprofessional relations (50 percent), supervisory skills (47 percent), personnel management (43 percent) and staffing (43 percent). It is interesting to note that at no point was the area of group functioning or dynamics specifically mentioned in the responses of this section.

The participants were then asked to identify the skills which they considered the most difficult to acquire on the job. Highest on the list was management technology (40 percent), followed by organizational and interorganizational dynamics (33 percent), budget and resource allocation (20 percent) and professional self-assessment and evaluation (17 percent). Twenty-nine out of the 30 participants identified interventive skills which had been hard for them to acquire within the framework of their work experience. Thirty-eight percent spoke of areas which fell under the general rubric of professional use

of self within the agency setting. This included such areas as roles in staff relations, dealing with those in authority, developing an individual sense of authority, and adapting the job to meet individual needs. Supporting this area, but within a more specific frame of reference, were the areas of personnel management (24 percent) and inter-professional relationships (24 percent).

In terms of agency changes which could affect job performance, 20 participants responded. Of this group, over half (55 percent) mentioned new systems of management and the introduction of management experts to oversee their operation, considerably fewer mentioned new agency priorities (25 percent), and under 25 percent mentioned the areas of program expansion, staff turnover and changes in agency leadership. The effects of the changes on managers' perceptions of their control of their job were harder to establish. Of the 13 who responded to the question, 62 percent thought that the changes would give them more control and 31 percent thought they would have less control.

The final question included in this section sought to establish what the managers thought they would have to know to be promoted. The intent of this question was to get an indication of the skills and knowledge which the group anticipated they would need. Only 30 percent of the 23 who answered focused on the acquisition of skills, citing administrative decision-making and fund raising as the main new skills needed. The range of other responses gave clues as to the significance of the question for the group as they considered their mobility in administrative areas. Twenty-six percent thought they would have to change their own attitude about administration. Almost as many thought

they would have to use more political skills (22 percent). A similar number (22 percent) pointed out that promotion within the agency was not possible either because there were no higher jobs open to social work professionals, or the agency did not have other administrative positions.

Professional Learning Styles and Preferred Resources

Working professionals augment their knowledge and skills in many different ways. In order to integrate the new program's design with the learning styles of the target population, it was necessary to get a better idea of some of the learning approaches both formal and informal which were used by social workers in middle management. One of the objectives of the questions in this section was to gain some perspective on the role of formal learning in the professional life of the social worker in administration. Was continuing education viewed as valuable on the job or when considering a job change?

The first question asked in this area related to how the managers had gone about learning the skills necessary to function effectively on their present jobs. During the first interviews it became clear, as it had earlier in the discussion about the stress of job transition, that the present job was not necessarily the one in which the issue of the acquisition of management skills was of key concern. Therefore the question was expanded to allow the respondents to describe learning experiences on earlier jobs in administrative areas. This encouraged a broader view of personal learning styles which had emerged over time.

All 30 participants in the survey responded to this question. The responses were divided into formal and informal learning resources. Among the formal resources used, courses given outside the agency were the most popular (60 percent), followed by inservice training (33 percent). Among the informal resources mentioned, almost half the group (47 percent), cited reading, and almost half cited role models (47 percent). Trial and error was mentioned by 23 percent. Most of the respondents used more than one type of resource often citing two or three. Thirty percent identified three types, 40 percent identified two types and another 30 percent mentioned only one type. Of the total group, 27 percent had taken outside courses in administration or management. Twenty-three percent had taken clinically-oriented courses which they thought had aided them in their administrative work, and seven percent had taken both clinical and administration courses.

A question about the availability of inservice training to help managers respond to educational needs generated by changes in the agency did not yield sufficient data to warrant comment at this time. Only 15 respondents thought the question even applied to them. An attempt to gain an impression of the managers reactions to the courses they had taken outside their agencies produced such vague answers that this question also was dropped from the analysis.

In order to discover whether this group of managers had attempted to find outside courses relevant to their needs, they were asked to list any courses or programs which had captured their interest even though they had not been able to participate in them at the time. Of the 13 who identified resources which they had not used but thought would have been useful, 85 percent cited management or administration

courses, eight percent identified group process seminars, and eight percent mentioned clinical courses. Although there was a second part to this question relating to the identification of obstacles to their participation, this question was not routinely asked due to a shortage of interview time.

The attempt was made to ascertain the extent to which this group thought their career movement would be enhanced by further training in administrative or management areas. Of the 21 who responded, 62 percent indicated that their career movement would be enhanced very much, 31 percent thought it would be enhanced a little, and seven percent thought it would not be enhanced at all.

The members of the sample were asked to identify the factors which would influence their choice of a postgraduate continuing education program. A wide variety of responses emerged from this open-ended question. Although, as with all the other responses the tabulation was made by administrative level, this did not prove useful to an understanding of the data.

TABLE 18

Factors Influencing Choice of Program	Managers (N = 25)	
	Number	Percent
Transferability of Skills to Other Jobs	10	40
Credential Leading to Social Work Doctorate	7	28
Credential for Formal Recognition of Participation	6	24
Credential in Management	3	12
Applicability to Present Job	2	8
Length of Program Commitment	1	4
Auspice of Program	1	4

If each respondent who mentioned a credential, even if it were not the same kind of credential, were added together, it would represent 60 percent of the total responding to this question. The issue of a credential for a continuing education program was viewed as important to a large percentage of the group and may very well be linked to the question of a program's usefulness in terms of mobility and movement to other jobs. The fact that so few would assess a program's utility in terms of its applicability to their present job would seem to bear this out.

The final question included in this section related to the obstacles the managers saw to their own participation in a postgraduate continuing education program. The question was open-ended, and multiple responses were encouraged.

TABLE 19

Obstacles to Participation	Managers (N = 25)	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Competing Priorities for Available Time	12	48
Assessment of Appropriateness of Program	12	48
Current Involvement in Educational Program	5	20
Lack of Motivation	3	12
Financial Strain	2	8

The respondents showed a marked concern about the use of their time. A large percentage of the group (48 percent) indicated that competing priorities for their time made it difficult for them to commit themselves. When this was coupled with the apparent difficulty in assessing

whether a program was going to be appropriate for a given level of experience, whatever competing priorities there were, were found to win. If an individual is pressed for time, and then has to conduct a search for an educational program to suit specialized needs, the chances are that he or she will get sidetracked if the search is too difficult. This would underly the importance of the design and presentation of any new program to the target group of social work administrators in middle management. There would have to be clarity of programmatic content, and ongoing accessibility of program staff for consultation about registration.

Summary: Identification of Learning Styles and Resources

All the social workers in the survey identified at least one type of resource which they used to further their professional learning. Forty percent identified two types and another 30 percent identified three types. Informal resources were used by almost three-quarters of the sample (73 percent). Forty-seven percent actively read in their field, 47 percent consciously used role models, and 23 percent relied on trial and error. Formal resources were used by 70 percent of the group, showing that many relied on a number of different learning approaches. Outside courses were taken by over half the group (60 percent) and inservice training by over a quarter (30 percent). Of the 18 respondents who had taken outside courses, 44 percent had selected courses in administration and management. Thirty-nine percent had selected clinically oriented courses, and 11 percent both clinical and administration. Of the 10 respondents who had participated in inservice training, six had had training in administrative areas.

All the participants in the survey were asked if they had found courses or programs of interest which they had not been able to attend. Of the 13 who responded, 85 percent mentioned administration or management programs. In terms of the role of further formal training in expanding career options, of the 29 who responded, 62 percent thought that their career movement would be enhanced very much by further formal training. Another 31 percent thought their careers would be only moderately enhanced.

As the group (of 25) looked at the factors which would influence their choice of a postgraduate program, 64 percent thought that a credential was an important factor in their choice of a program. Forty percent thought that transferability of the skills learned to other future jobs was key. Only a very small number (eight percent) wanted to be able to apply their new skills to their present job. The stress on gaining a credential to document participation in a course or a program, coupled with the high percentage of the sample indicating that transferability of skills to other jobs was important, points to a major concern with mobility among social workers in middle levels of administration, at least within this sample.

The final question in this section related to the social work managers' view of obstacles to their participation in a postgraduate program in administration. Of the 25 who responded, 48 percent stressed that the identification of the appropriate program was a major concern. Forty-eight percent also indicated that lack of time was an obstacle to participation. It may be that the anticipated obstacle related to determining program suitability served as a major inhibiting factor, particularly when coupled with other competing priorities.

As mentioned earlier, this area relates specifically to the issues of access, and recruitment, each a major focus of this project.

Issues in Program Planning

The last section of the survey focused on educational program planning in a very specific sense. The participants were asked to indicate their interests and preferences with regard to the content, organization and structure which they would seek in a postgraduate program if they were to enroll.

The first question was presented in terms of a listing of content areas which had been gathered from readings and discussion with management program planners and educators. The participants in the survey were given the list of seven broad categories and were asked to indicate the areas which they thought were most important to them in their position. They were encouraged to check at least three separate areas.

The findings, once again, were tabulated by level but did not yield enough differentiation to warrant their presentation in this form.

TABLE 20

Course Content Areas	Manager (N = 30)	
	Number	Percent
Policy and Planning	22	73
Personnel Management	20	67
Organizational Development	19	63
Supervision	18	60
Budgeting	16	53
Issues in Middle Management	14	47
Monitoring and Evaluation	13	43

In the recognition that the seven areas presented did not cover many other topics which might be useful for middle level managers, the question was followed by an open-ended question in which the participants were encouraged to identify specific areas of interest even if they appeared to duplicate some elements of the earlier list. The responses to this question were divided into two groups, those that did indeed reflect subtopics within the context of the earlier list of areas, and those which were separate areas, and did not fall within the content framework which had already been established by the earlier question.

TABLE 21

Content Areas Related to Those Presented in the Survey	Managers (N = 23)	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Cost Accounting and Related Concepts	8	35
Labor and Management Relations	7	30
Supervision of Staff in Special Fields	6	26
Organizational Stress and Change	3	13
Program Implementation Strategies	2	9
Policy Development in an Environmental Context	1	4
Job and Task Analysis	1	4
Creative Decision-making in Middle Management	1	4
Historical View of Social Policy and Agency Development	1	4
Minorities in Management	1	4
Integration of Management and Clinical Practice	1	4

While none of these areas were mentioned by a large percentage of the group, the fact that so many areas were even mentioned at all was considered significant. It illustrated that this group of social workers was actively thinking about management roles and the challenges implicit in learning more skills related to their work.

The second group of topics fell outside the framework of the content areas listed in the original question.

TABLE 22

New Content Areas	Managers (N = 23)	
	Number	Percent
Management Technology	12	52
Interdisciplinary Systems and Relations	8	35
Administration and Leadership	4	17
Agency Communication Systems	3	13
Legal Responsibilities	2	9
Social Action	2	9
Ethics	2	9
Fund Raising	1	4
Board Development	1	4
Professional Writing	1	4
Professional Mobility and Politics	1	4

In spite of the respondents' concern, expressed earlier, about time and priorities as they related to participation in a continuing education program, it is impressive to note the breadth of areas of interest and concern manifested once they become engaged with the possibilities for continued learning.

Summary: Issues in Program Planning

Seven broad areas of substantive learning related to management skills were presented to the members of the sample. Of these areas, five: policy planning, personnel management, organizational development, supervision and budgeting were seen by over 50 percent of the participants as relevant to their educational needs. The remaining two areas, monitoring and evaluation and issues in middle management were mentioned by just under 50 percent.

In response to several open-ended questions relating to other areas of interest, 23 participants cited 22 more specific areas of concern. The most frequently mentioned areas included: Management Technology (52 percent), Cost Accounting (35 percent), Interdisciplinary Systems (35 percent), Labor Management Relations (30 percent), and Supervision of Special Staff Groups (26 percent).

In terms of course style, small learning groups with an emphasis on sharing of case situations and a mutual sharing of issues and solutions was preferred (89 percent). Case situations were seen as the best vehicle for the introduction of theoretical material. A question about the composition of the learning group brought out the issue of whether to divide students by experience. The group was split three ways in their responses. One third wanted single level learning groups, another third wanted multi-level groups, and the last third wanted divisions to be based on the needs of course content. Over half the group wanted social workers and other human services professionals to be in the same program. The rest preferred a narrower professional base limited to social workers.

The planning survey was conducted with the goal of exploring some assumptions about obstacles to participation in a continuing education program in administration for social workers. The analysis of the data yielded a number of directions for future planning activity. Categorizing the managers in the sample by level did not prove to be fruitful in the analysis of the data. The sample was small in absolute numbers and the spread of responses rarely revealed any clustering of significance.

If the diversity among the responses is to be trusted, it indicated that a continuing education program in administration would have to seek a broad audience. Not everyone saw themselves as following a career path which inexorably led to ever higher levels of management. The stress which had been encountered by many during the transition from direct service to administrative duties appeared to point to a basic division of educational and socialization needs between the new supervisor and those managers who had been in their positions a longer time.

Possible obstacles to participation emerged in several areas. First, a strong continuing identification with a clinical model of practice despite ongoing administrative responsibilities, was evident among many of the participants. A second area presenting obstacles was the identification of individual learning needs in administration and having the time and energy to find the right program to address them. This difficulty was compounded by the issue of competing priorities, which was cited by many of the respondents.

A key incentive emerged in the responses of the survey relating to the interest in job changes and mobility. A sense of impermanence,

lack of commitment to place was an overall impression. Mobility and the desire to use any educational commitment to further not only specific competency but general competency for some future move vertically or laterally, might well prove to be a key incentive for taking the program, one which would overcome other stated objectives.

Footnotes

¹ Simon Slavin, "A Framework for Selecting Content for Teaching About Social Administration," Administration in Social Work, 1: 3 (Fall 1977), pp. 253-54.

² Ibid.

³ David Fanshel, "Status Differentials: Men and Women in Social Work," Social Work, 21 (November 1976).

⁴ Kenneth J. Kazmerski, "Toward the Expansion of Social Work Education for Administration" (unpublished DSW dissertation, Hunter College School of Social Work, 1976).

⁵ Rino Patti, et al., "From Direct Service to Administration: A Study of Social Workers' Transitions from Clinical to Management Roles, Part I: Analysis," Administration in Social Work, 3: 2 (Summer 1979), pp. 145-47.

⁶ Roselyn H. Chernesky, "Women Administrators in Social Work," Women's Issues in Social Work Practice, ed. by Elaine Norman and Arlene Mancuso (Itasca, Ill.: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1980), p. 247.

⁷ Rino J. Patti, et al., "A Survey of Management Practice and Managers in Social Welfare Agencies: A Preliminary Analysis," in Educating for Management in Social Welfare (a report of the Social Welfare Management Curriculum Development Project conducted under the joint auspices of the School of Social Work and the Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Washington, United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Social and Rehabilitation Service, SRS-84-P90261/01, July 1976), pp. 11-14.

CHAPTER VI

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter outlines the framework of the program as it evolved, based on the integration of the theoretical foundation established in Chapters II and III, and the results of the field survey described in Chapter V.

The program was implemented almost exactly one year later than originally planned. The delay resulted from decisions based on the results of the analysis of the field survey conducted during the fall and winter of 1977. In summary, the survey revealed a breadth of interest and a concern for program magnitude which far surpassed the original conception of the writer. The consequence of these findings was an expansion of the early concept of a series of courses into a program of considerably broader scope. The new proposal required more planning time in order to insure that it would emerge as a coherent program rather than a loose list of continuing education courses in administrative areas. Other minor changes in the project design are discussed within the body of this chapter.

From Theory to Practice

While the program in operation brought its own reward in terms of community response, the crystalization of the practice principles guiding the planning brought rewards in terms of the potential of

transfer of knowledge to others for future program design. The principles of design served a number of related purposes integral to responsible program development, implementation, evaluation and replication.

- a. They preserve in a clear form the history of the thought process behind program conceptualization, organizing knowledge and past experience, and providing direction for future actions.
- b. They provide the operational link between practice theory and value-based beliefs; and problem definition, planning priorities and limiting planning options.
- c. They permit the isolation and reintegration of design elements while providing a structure for insuring internal cohesion and attention to program goals.
- d. They introduce a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of program design in terms of the premises upon which the program was based.
- e. They encourage examination of analogous planning situations and allow for replication of the total program or selection of appropriate design strategies guided by identification of common conditions.

The goal of the planning process for the new program in continuing education was to recognize the situational context of the organizational and social environment and to apply what was known about the target population to the development of the program. The conceptual background for the program and its relationship to its organizational environment was drawn from organizational theory. The analysis of the target population for whom the program was designed was based on tenets of sociological role and reference group theory supported by the field survey conducted for the project. The tenets of andragogy were explored for their use in establishing principles of educational practice and for establishing the style of program administration conducive to encouraging communication, support and feedback.

The Program Design

A continuing education program can build by accretion over time in response to its environment, or it can attempt to shape the environment upon which it is dependent. The writer chose to attempt the latter course. The assumption was that if theory were to be tested and planning to have consequence, the program had to have an impact on the environment of the target population. It should not simply be responsive to continuous currents of change and demand.

Throughout the theoretical discussion of the position of a continuing education program within its organizational setting ran the themes of marginality, dependence and vulnerability. The impact of a new clientele on a new program and the ever present threat of goal displacement as questions about program legitimacy surfaced, required special attention to the planning process to insure program stability.

The overall design of the program reflected the planned response to the issues mentioned above. The objective was to present a clear statement of programmatic intent of the program's outset. Later modifications based on student interest and suggestion were expected, and mechanisms to insure critical feedback were built into the program. However the basic shape of the program was conceived as part of a rational process. The goal was to make a critical impact on the community of social work professionals with the image of a new program which would promote the definition of the target population, to be followed with the program based on the reality of broad needs.

The rationale for choosing this approach toward program design was based on several findings of the field survey. The participants in the survey did not identify themselves as in middle management, nor did

they identify themselves as a group. The responses however indicated that they were interested in obtaining further education to achieve more mobility in the field, and to a lesser extent, to be able to perform their current jobs more effectively. They mentioned uncertainty about finding courses which would really prove to be useful, and resentment of the time it would take to really assess their value. They expressed interest in a cohesive program to guide them through basic management areas, rather than a series of isolated courses. Finally they indicated a preference for degree or certificate programs where there would be some official recognition and documentation of their participation and completion of a course of study. Their willingness to discuss a variety of personal reactions to the issues raised in the survey could be seen as indirect testimony to the fact that social workers in administration are confronted with difficult choices and decisions regarding their professional growth and career direction.

The philosophical base of the program was that the integration of good management with social welfare programs need not conflict with social work goals, but the two areas should enhance each other. In order for this to occur, social workers at all levels should have a grasp of administration and management issues. Social workers in middle management roles particularly must have an understanding of both service delivery and organizational needs. It is on this level that many issues emerge challenging the skill of the administrator who must negotiate between direct service and the policy directive.

Through the field survey a wide variety of management functions and tasks were identified which related to specific areas of knowledge and definable skills. The respondents identified a number of areas in

which they had not been able to acquire on the job training. They underlined the following areas as the most problematic in their ongoing work.

- a. Organizational Development and Theory. Many in middle management identified themselves as change agents within their systems, either introducing new programs, approaches or procedures, or having to respond to changes in government guidelines which they were in the position to implement with their staff. An understanding of the dynamics of their organization's functioning was felt to be crucial to performing effectively.
- b. Policy and Planning. Few felt that they had an adequate understanding of the political, social and economic environment in which social policy is determined, or analyzing the effect of national policies on local services or skills in pressuring for changes in social policies.
- c. The Budgeting Process. Although not many respondents manifested much enthusiasm about this area, practically all agreed that much greater understanding of the budget's use for planning and control was necessary. A basic familiarity with budgeting terminology, design and interpretation was seen as important on all levels.
- d. Personnel Management. A major function of the social worker in middle management appeared to revolve around personnel issues. A number of survey participants cited confusion and trial and error approaches to personnel problems as they had tried to use their casework training to resolve problems.
- e. Information Systems and Data Processing. A fear of the computerized approach to data collection and processing, combined with a lack of knowledge about how to assess a manual information system in terms of its effectiveness made this area one of concern to many respondents who spent considerable portions of their work day dealing with the flow of information. Computer systems had brought new groups of technicians and professionals into the social agencies. Many found problems in communicating their needs and practices to these newcomers to the social welfare arena.
- f. Management Technology. Good management and skills in administration were recognized by all the respondents who had an interest in further positions of responsibility for social program operation. The reluctance to pursue formal education in this area was discussed earlier in this summary.
- g. Supervision. The transition from direct practice, whether casework, group work or community organization, to a position

of administrative responsibility was seen as key. Whether the successful shift in approach, attitude and conceptualization of role was effected at this point or not, was cited as an important link in determining future career direction. The need for a new conceptual understanding of professional role in relation to different levels of staff and the organizational structure was stressed.

The five following areas were selected from this grouping to form the basis of the core of the program: Organizational Theory, Management Technology, Financial Planning, Personnel Management, and Policy Planning. A sixth area was included in the core program despite the fact that there was very little mention or enthusiasm manifested for it during the survey. This was the area of program monitoring and evaluation. The few respondents who had indicated that this was of crucial importance, and the discussions held with some of the educational consultants mentioned earlier in this report, convinced the writer that this would be an important area for social workers as we move into an era demanding increasing mechanisms of accountability for all agency activities.

While the six core courses contained some overlapping areas of content, it was intended that they remain discrete to encourage those who were interested in enrolling for one or two courses only, to do so. Those who wanted to obtain a certificate, however, had to successfully complete each of the core courses. The certificate was intended to document that a student had completed a formal course of study which included the basic areas of knowledge covered in the core courses.

Based on the andragogical assumption that adult students are self-motivated and purposeful in their desire to gain skills for increased mastery over work situations, the program was designed on a

trimester basis. Each semester, five out of the six core courses were to be offered on a rotating basis. The entire program could be covered within the three semester span if a student had the inclination. Electives were offered each semester, but they were not part of the core program.

The first group of electives were also selected on the basis of the results of the field survey. Since many of the respondents had indicated that stressful transitions into administrative positions really initiated with the shift from direct practice to supervision, a course was specially designed for the group of social workers who were encountering this change in their own work situations. It was titled, *From Direct Practice to Supervision*.

One other area which was highlighted in the survey was that of professional self-assessment. It was anticipated that this need would be met through the context of the classroom situation, questions, faculty responses. Papers, projects and exams would contribute to a sense of professional level and assessment of strengths and weakness or gaps. Other themes which emerged from the survey were areas of interventive behavior and style: working with authority, using authority, exerting leadership, and interpersonal relations. It was anticipated that successive elective courses could encompass these themes in some unified way. They also became areas of focus in discussions with the faculty members when orienting them to the concerns and needs of potential students in their courses.

These planning decisions were based on both the theoretical background and the results of the survey. It was reasoned that a complete program would create an image and a reality where none had been before. One of the difficulties in establishing any new program is breaking through the

existing networks of resources or accustomed lack of resources. The latter may only be an indication that people have not been able to identify and channel a need in a specific direction. But this could not be known until the program was put into operation. The presence of a complete program, as opposed to a changing list of courses, should magnify the new program's legitimacy in the eyes of potential participants as well as in the eyes of the program staff and faculty. This positive effect on the staff should have a spinoff on their functioning as boundary personnel where they come into contact with other organizations and individuals relating to the program as part of the organization set.

Almost half of the sample in the field survey had been in their present job for a year or less. The nature of middle management is that everyone expects to pass through whether moving laterally or vertically, but few expect to stay where they are. A continuing education program with a required set of core courses is continually buffeted by demands for adaptation in response to a changing work environment. While some program flexibility must be encouraged, limits are crucial to program integrity and continuity. A program conceptualization which presents a clear statement of intent, means and ends, can encompass flexibility and response to changing needs because of the creation of its own boundaries while mitigating against the negative impact of pressures for organizational adaptation. New programs must guard against the temptation to be all things to all people, thereby creating a situation where the program is totally dependent on the outside environment for a sense of direction. A focus and clarity

about the population to be served and its relationship to the program is essential. Within the overall target population, subgroups of social workers in middle management, the field survey gave clues as to the most difficult aspect of program design and implementation. Considerable diversity existed within the areas of educational background, experience, work demands, career expectations, and learning styles of those interviewed. The survey sample was too small to do more than hint at the existence of such a diversity. The analysis and summary of the findings have focused on the threads of commonality of educational interests and concerns, in order to mold a program to provide for the most generic educational and skill needs of this population.

The theoretical concept of exchange was extremely useful in planning the new program. The exchanges explored in the planning process often related to the generally weak position of continuing education within the educational system. This required the development of close links with groups both in and outside the educational institution. The co-sponsorship of the program by the Center for the Study of Social Administration and the Hunter College School of Social Work established a framework for a series of reciprocities with the new program. The sponsors added considerable legitimacy to the program. The program played the role of establishing the credibility of the Center. The program also served to demonstrate the School of Social Work's interest in furthering the professional education of social workers in the field, as well as a concern for improving agency internal functioning.

Exchanges are not limited to the organizational level but will be considered again in the discussion of faculty selection and in the section on recruitment of students. In terms of the support necessary

from the outside environment, directors of community agencies were identified who might be of help in aspects of early program design as well as providing a source of recommendation for students. For this group the exchanges related to their having the opportunity to have an impact on the design of the new program, to make it relevant to their staff needs, and the prestige of having been selected for this advisory role to the new program. The program also benefited significantly from the content-based suggestions, and the early building of rapport with key people in the field.

The Organizational Structure

The formation of a new program requires attention to the internal communication and cooperative relationships for effective program operation, as well as the program's relationship to the wider environment. Weick has argued for a consideration of different interrelated elements of a program forming a variety of what he terms looser or tighter couplings. These couplings can indicate different degrees of responsiveness and interdependence, which I would postulate, form the boundaries of a series of interlocking, shifting exchanges.

Weick proposed the concept of loose coupling as an area needing more research. However, even at this stage, it presents a useful concept to explore as a framework for this program in that it rationalizes the shifting intensity of communication and patterns of control during the program's early growth stages.

In order to make some tentative decisions regarding the degree of coupling that would be desirable among the components of the new

program, it was necessary to assess its contextual situation. Three key factors which define the vulnerability of the program organizationally have been discussed at length earlier in this section: the scarcity of resources for ongoing support of the program, organizational marginality and program legitimacy. Based on these factors, it was determined that initially there should be tight coupling between administrative planning staff and the target population in the planning stages, in that the program would be designed to respond specifically to the interests and needs of this group. This would continue through the recruitment phase. Then there would be a shift to a much looser coupling between staff and students and a much tighter one between faculty and students as the faculty tailored the courses to the particular students who had enrolled.

The impact of shifting the areas where tighter and looser coupling occurred was an attempt to shift the loci of responsibility for program direction and interpretation. Initially, planning staff had the responsibility to insure that policy for design would be set as a response to the broader environment of the program, while the eventual adaptation of the curriculum and the course material to the enrolled student population would rest primarily with the faculty. The expected diversity of the student group based on the findings of the field survey, the differing levels, widely varying supervisory responsibilities and job tasks, required that each instructor take stock of the actual group level and make necessary adaptations. The checks on the adaptations came in the form of the formal and informal feedback mechanisms which were developed to insure that the program delivery did not stray too widely from its intention despite the looser

relationship among the elements during the operational phases.

A loose coupling between administrative staff and faculty allowed the faculty to have the independence to respond to differing class levels and idiosyncratic interests without having to involve the administrative staff. The dangers of loose coupling were elaborated earlier. They relate to the fact that the lack of communication regarding changes in curriculum or program response may inhibit the entire organization from shifting its response, or from acting as a check on inappropriate adaptations. One of the difficulties connected with loose coupling between staff and faculty is that the localized adaptations by individual faculty members may make the same course radically different each semester. Too severe a lack of standardization could produce significant inequality among courses, both those in the same time frame and those following sequentially in time, making the granting of a certificate a formality without substance.

While the faculty had considerable flexibility and leeway regarding the design of the courses, there was periodic monitoring by the administrative staff which provided a necessary overview to maintain the coherence of the program. The mechanisms to accomplish this included advance drafts of course outlines and assignments and exams, immediate follow-up contacts with students who did not attend two classes in a row. Other more formal types of feedback have already been mentioned.

As the program grew and shifts in the nature and strength of coupling evolved these could be viewed as changes in the pattern of exchanges and in terms of changing patterns of independence and control. Areas of anticipated tight coupling occurred in the arenas of

administrative staff responsibility for securing supplies, books for the courses, library resources, and the time-sequenced events as presented in the brochure. An example of a situation in which the program was caught short in not carefully identifying interdependent events was when a new semester's registration period overlapped with the return of the exams from the previous semester. These activities were seen by staff as independent and unrelated. In actual fact they turned out to be tightly coupled, time-bound events. Students waited to register until they had received their exams in the mail. This made planning for the new semester exceedingly difficult due to the significant number of last minute registrations. Instructors had to be alerted at the last moment to teach overflow sections of one course; books were not always available. This was the outstanding example of where the planning broke down through the lack of recognition of the degree of interdependence of the two events.

Faculty Selection

The program staff has many things to consider when hiring faculty for a continuing education program. In many respects the program is evaluated by the outside community in terms of the faculty. The individual and collective impact of the faculty, the image they create and the reality of their work in the classroom brings the program beyond its statement of philosophy and intent to its practice or implementation.

The faculty who were selected for the program came from both work and academic settings. The faculty recruitment effort centered on finding individual social work administrators who could serve as role models and who were able conceptually to convey the complexities of

administrative work within a social work value system. Since each course was expected to have a mix of conceptual and practical-technical material, an instructor whose primary knowledge had come through experience was expected to do additional preparation to develop the conceptual framework and context. Instructors selected from academic settings were expected to develop the pragmatic applicability of their material to the working world through assignments which could be put to use in the work setting. All faculty were encouraged to develop work-related assignments.

Most of the faculty selected from organizational settings were from the upper-middle levels of management. Their positions and agency affiliation were clearly noted on the brochure for the program. It was anticipated that the agency, and position statements would act as a screening device, and only those whose position was at a slightly lower level and below would register for a course. Thus the anticipated enrollment was seen to be lower middle management social workers, and those moving into supervisory levels.

For a number of the instructors selected from work settings, this opportunity was their first in a prolonged teaching capacity. Each prospective faculty member was interviewed by the writer, and often by the Program Director, Dr. Harold Weissman. The writer would then plan one or two subsequent meetings to discuss the origins of the program, the characteristics and educational needs of the student group which was expected to enroll, and the teaching approaches which were thought to be most appropriate in working with professionals.

One week before the program was scheduled to begin, a meeting with the faculty was scheduled, to share course outlines and begin the

work of developing some cohesion among a group of professional social workers, few of whom knew each other, or had an overview regarding the substantive content of the program. While the program offered the faculty a fairly low salary, certain other values in exchange were stressed: the chance to formalize their own learning and develop their own philosophy of administrative practice. For those interested in moving into teaching, this experience was expected to be a good proving ground. For those in academic life there was the opportunity to become familiar with the stresses of the workplace. The challenges of teaching at the postgraduate, continuing education level are many and are intensified by the many levels of students who enroll. This factor proved to be the dominant stress of working in this setting for all the instructors. In later months, once the program was in operation, this proved to be a never ending topic of discussion.

In order to support the individual instructors, a system of staff liaison was designed. A staff member was assigned to sit in on selected classes to observe teaching style, content, applicability of material to the level of the group and group responsiveness. It was not anticipated that the staff liaison would intervene in the class, or necessarily make any effort to change course direction. Feedback would be given to an instructor only on request, unless there was a real difficulty seen in the course progress. The instructors were expected to make their own adaptations to class needs, without the intervention of the program staff. In this way, the loose coupling could be maintained.

Recruitment: The Structure of Promoting Engagement

The ingredients for insuring that there was an active audience for the new program were many. There is no real way to know which elements were the key contributors to the success of the program and the high level of interest which was demonstrated by the social work community. A number of steps were very consciously taken to underline the concern with the various groups who would be in a position to have an impact on the potential student body.

The field survey conducted with 30 social workers in middle management was the first concerted move in the direction of engaging the interest of the social work community at large. Although few members of this group actually attended the first semester's courses, they were in a position to recommend participation on the part of their peers or subordinates. However, it is not known whether this was actually done.

Shortly after the field survey was completed overtures were made to executives of a number of the larger voluntary social agencies as well as some upper management personnel of the public agencies, to meet and respond to a preliminary assessment of needs gathered from the survey and a proposed program outline. Several meetings were held and the program's outlines presented. The interest, support and considerable programmatic criticism emerged which proved useful in refining the program direction. Of further use was the legitimating and publicizing function of sharing the planning and magnitude of the continuing education program. This sub-group of the social work community was in a position to support the endeavor internally with their own subordinate staff. It was also important to stress that the program could be viewed as

a resource to them for staff training needs. From the program planner's point of view, support for student participation from agency top levels was expected to serve to legitimate the program in the eyes of middle level staff. Encouragement for agency support, such as financial reimbursement for participation, or possible time off to compensate for evening classes, were some of the anticipated outcomes of including key agency personnel in the early stages of the program planning.

Once planning was concluded, it was followed by brochure design and mailing. Three separate mailings were used, the local chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, numbering 5,000, the agencies receiving the Community Council of Greater New York newsletter, Hunter College School of Social Work alumnae and field instructors associated with the school. The program staff available to respond to the mailings consisted of Dr. Harold Weissman, the program director, the writer, and Ms. Rosemarie Oliphant, a second year graduate student in administration. The responses to the mailing came in four forms: registration via a tear-off form on the brochure, telephone inquiry, drop in, or attendance at the evening program orientation meeting. All staff responded to telephone, drop in, or mailed queries with the goal of individualizing the needs of each person whenever possible, and serving as program interpreters.

The evening program orientation meeting was announced in the brochure. It took place several weeks before the beginning of classes, so that those who were in some question about the program could, in an informal setting, ask questions, meet other prospective students and talk with the faculty members and receive some guidance as to appropriate courses, if necessary. The orientation meeting served as the major

vehicle for communication and screening prospective students. The need for communication with prospective students to develop appropriate course placement, and when necessary, discouragement to those who were not currently in administrative positions who were looking for a strictly academic experience. The practical goals of the program had to be stressed so that the ever present problem of too great a diversity of levels in a single class would not be too great.

The diversity of student levels in a continuing education program is an enduring issue. In an open enrollment program where all applicants were expected to have completed an MSW and have worked in administrative areas of the social work field, it was anticipated that a basic level of capability and experience would be maintained. While some variation within an educational group is a positive learning factor too wide a span serves only to frustrate those on one end of the spectrum or the other, and possibly both.

The continuing education program had limited staff and resources available for screening individual students, and also was under the constraint that there was a dependence on enrollment for program survival. There were certain operational principles which were observed which formed the guide for program admittance. The prospective students were to have as many opportunities as possible to make their own decisions as to whether their level and that of the course was an appropriate match. This was accomplished in a variety of ways: the brochure did not just list the courses but gave full paragraph descriptions of the content which would be covered. All personal or telephone contacts were aimed at reinforcing the expectations for work and applicability of the material to the applicant's present work situation.

The major design decisions were based on the adaptation of the findings of the survey to the theoretical framework established in Chapter II. The theoretical base contributing to a major concern with communication patterns was drawn from the tenets of andragogy, and the isolation following movement into a management position. The assumption was that a commitment to seeking systematic learning experience can take place when the individual: (a) recognizes a current developmental task associated with the performance of an expected social role for which he lacks the requisite knowledge and skills, or (b) anticipates or contemplates movement into a new social role whose parameters are not exactly known and he wants to establish a new framework for the acquisition of new areas of competence. The stress on communication was also precipitated by the knowledge that despite enrollment in the program many social workers continue to have a skepticism about administration and management training, based in large part on their prior professional socialization. Communication during the program offers some outlet for the distrust, and perhaps fear at learning a new conceptual base for decision-making which may seem to threaten to take them further away from basic social work skills. The goal was to allow them to have the feeling that within some boundaries they would have the opportunity to adapt the program to their needs. While the primary forum for this was the classroom, and the primary responsibility for this lay with the instructor, at all early junctures with the program communication was encouraged which would reinforce the importance of these issues.

Organizing Principles of Design
For a Continuing Education Program
in Social Work Administration

Recruitment

1. The presentation of the program to the public should, through its structure and design, communicate that there is flexibility within the program to accommodate specific interests in individual course offerings as well as a systematic approach to sequenced learning.
2. The conceptual framework of the program must be congenial with the professional value base and practice demands of social work administrators. This must be communicated both formally through the brochure, and informally in all contacts with prospective students who make inquiry about the program. Informal discussions with prospective students should focus on individual learning needs.
3. There should be a formal opportunity for prospective students to meet with the program administrative staff and faculty and be able to talk with other prospective students. This might take place in a single evening meeting which would serve as an orientation to the program. Its purpose would be to allow prospective students to have a rational basis upon which to evaluate the program.
4. Success in recruitment will be the result of correctly identifying patterns of needs among a particular subgroup of the larger target group, and designing a program which will by its style, design, structure and content offer the promise of meeting those needs.

Organizational Design

1. A new educational program should have sufficient strength at the point of implementation to make the multiple impacts on its environment which would be necessary to break through the existing network of educational resources.
2. Multiple bases of exchange must be defined, developed, and periodically evaluated throughout the planning period to insure that the most useful reciprocities are established for the program within, and outside its organizational set. Particular attention must be paid to sources for exchange which have the potential to compromise the integrity of the program. The vulnerability of a continuing education

program due to issues of organizational marginality and legitimacy must be offset by careful selection of sources for exchange.

3. Students perform a variety of functions for and with educational programs. In organizational terms, their impact should be assessed in terms of their complex role in an exchange process. Of particular importance for a new program is the experience and level of sophistication of the the first group of enrolled students. The student body in the aggregate creates an image of the program within social agencies, within the program itself, and in the broader community. To a large extent the first group will determine the level of the program and its future participants.

Students provide legitimacy to the program by their attendance and the program reciprocates by certifying their participation. This mode of exchange places numerous constraints on the continuing education program during its initial growth phases. There must be appropriate attention given to the ingredients of this reciprocal arrangement, particularly as it may relate to compromises regarding selection of students for the program.

4. Faculty should be selected with an understanding of their roles in the exchange process. Each instructor brings the additional identification of his or her agency and position within the agency. This should lend additional credibility to the program and assist in the process of breaking through the established network of educational resources.

Program Management

1. There must be recognition of the particular stresses which a continuing education program undergoes as it interfaces with students. All staff and faculty must be considered boundary personnel with some degree of autonomy to respond to pressures from external sources, both at the time of recruitment and throughout the program. This requires attention to the definition of the relationship between program elements.
2. The process of determining the degree of loose or tight coupling must be accomplished after an analysis of the interdependent aspects of the planned program's operation. This must include a recognition of the differential degrees of coupling appropriate at various stages of the program's development. The goal in evolving a flexible pattern of couplings would be to insure program elements of enough autonomy to promote sufficient adaptability as well as appropriate controls for internal consistency.

Course Planning and Faculty Selection

1. Each course must demonstrate evidence of continuity with the experience of the social worker in administration, and reflect the demands of administrative practice in the social welfare field.
2. Each course must combine a theoretical and pragmatic approach to the knowledge and skills of management in social agencies. The substantive knowledge base cannot be ignored.
3. The course content must demonstrate that concern for individual learning and professional advancement cannot obliterate the obligation of the student to increase his ability to understand and interact with, and influence, his agency and organization on behalf of client needs.
4. Faculty should be selected who have already demonstrated their competence in the different aspects of social work administration. This should increase their influence as role models and their influence as sources of successful behavior change. It should also encourage learners to try out new attitudes toward administration and behavior in anticipation of positive reinforcement for themselves.
5. Faculty will be individually oriented to the philosophy of the program and to the basic principles of andragogy.

Adult Learning

1. There should be recognition of the value of prior life and work experiences of each individual in the class and his ability to contribute meaningfully from personal experiences. This should have the effect of reinforcing the respect for the adult level at which each is approaching the tasks of new learning, a respect for individual capacity as a self-directing adult. A position as a learner in one setting should not negate the socially responsible roles which students carry in other settings.
2. Each student will have a different style and rate of learning and a different degree of readiness to absorb, integrate and utilize new material. For the instructor, this requires a careful structuring of a climate and learning atmosphere which takes recognition of individual difference, and yet develops a commonality of substantive knowledge and purpose.
3. There should be recognition of the sense of immediacy which adult learners bring to a course of continuing education

which falls within their field of professional practice. The adult sense of time and readiness to learn brings both a demand for relevance and a critical capacity if they feel their time is being poorly used. They will constantly test the relevance and applicability of the new material emanating from the instructor and the classroom discussion. Their problem-centered orientation may outweigh their interest in a conceptual and theoretical framework.

4. Throughout the course there should be specific time set aside for mutual planning in order that the student can become actively engaged in identifying and diagnosing his own learning needs.
5. Anticipated rewards for participation must outweigh competing priorities for time and energy commitment of the student. The rewards may be in various forms:
 - a. The immediate relevance and usefulness of knowledge and skills on the job.
 - b. Clarity about deferred rewards where the goal is the building of a general competence for future practice in social work administration.
 - c. Opportunities to observe models of new behavior and consequences, in the protected setting of the classroom.
 - d. Opportunities to engage in rehearsing and practicing new behavior or the use of role play and simulation. Rehearsing offers benefits of active learning with modified and controlled consequences. Critical analysis of peers provides attention to learning gaps which may still exist.
6. Class time should be structured to insure that informal peer discussion of related work experiences, sharing and integration of new learning can take place in the classroom. Students should be provided with the opportunity for integration of old and new learning through informal times, class breaks, small group discussions as well as formal assignments, role play and simulation.
7. The students should be encouraged to engage in role learning through opportunities in class to observe, try out and analyze new skills in administrative areas. Both faculty and other students may be seen as role models within the class setting.
8. Assignments given in conjunction with each course should stress the integration and use of new conceptual material and its applications within the student's work setting. This requires recognition on the part of the instructor that each student's work responsibilities may vary considerably and

the latitude to carry out a plan of action may be curtailed in many spheres. Therefore, assignments must have the flexibility to encompass both realistic expectations of tasks that may be carried out as well as analytic components for those whose activities on the job are tightly circumscribed. For those who have no way of utilizing the new material on the job alternate hypothetical situations must be developed.

9. There should be recognition on the part of the instructor that a latent function of educational groups may be the development of a supportive peer group. Every effort should be made within each class to encourage this possibility through such means as small group assignments, mid-class breaks for informal discussion and sharing of scarce resources.

Program Evaluation Design

The evaluation of the program was designed to proceed in two stages. The first stage encompassed the formative evaluation and monitoring of the progress of the semester in operation. Results of the formative evaluation were to be made immediately available to the staff and the instructor. Based on the results of the evaluation changes could be made in the courses in process, or they could be made in the following semester. The evaluation instruments were designed with the objective of highlighting the content areas which had been found to be most useful, in the short run. The further objective was to identify the styles of instruction and individual course materials which proved most helpful to the students. The instruments were primarily descriptive and subjective, relying on the students' perceptions of their gains and faculty assessment of their growth. Four formal short-term evaluative processes were utilized in each course. They were expected to answer questions relating to the students' perceptions of movement toward increased knowledge in specific areas

covered in each course, their use of the material in their work setting, their application of the material in a situation removed from their own work experience, and their evaluation of the course as a whole.

1. Competency Assessment Rating Scale, pre and post test (Appendix B). At the beginning of the first class, students will be asked to assess their level of current knowledge and skill in eight key areas, on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). The areas are selected from the behavioral objectives outlined for the course. At the end of the last class the students will be asked to rate themselves on the same scale once again. The movement along the scale may be analyzed both for individual students and for the class as a group. This, while a subjective measure, will provide the student with a view of his own degree of movement and comfort with new areas of knowledge. It also will have the effect when looked at in the aggregate for each class, of highlighting areas which the group thought were well covered in the class, as well as those areas which gave the most difficulty.
2. Course Mid-Point Evaluation (Appendix C). At the end of the fifth class session, each student will be asked to outline the ways in which the course material has been used by him in his work setting. This can relate to changes in planning and executing work tasks, work behavior, new conceptual understanding, changes in attitude, or identification of new areas for special work projects. It will be important for the students to make this assessment to stimulate their integration of the material, and for the instructor as a check to insure that the group is able to use the material at the level at which it is being presented.
3. Course Final Evaluation (Appendix D). During the last class of each course, all students will be requested to evaluate a number of aspects of the course, its organization, content, style, level, and their own use of material as well as the areas which they anticipate will be useful to them in the future. There was a recognition based on the initial field survey, that a wide number of the students might be looking at the program as a way of gaining skills and knowledge in areas which did not relate directly to their work demands, but would assist them in their mobility and future job assignments. Since an overall goal of the program is to raise the level of social work management competence it was important to focus not only on the present needs of the group but their anticipated skill and conceptual understanding in a broader sense and time frame.
4. Course Assignments and Exams. The pattern of assignments which the instructors were asked to follow was one in which a series of smaller assignments led up to the completion

of a project which both integrated the material from the course and related to their work situation. The exam for each course was to reflect the student's conceptual understanding of the material covered and his ability to apply it to a situation removed from his familiar work setting, thus testing a conceptual understanding and the ability to analyze beyond the immediate setting, within a limited time period.

While the short term nature of any continuing education course presents a constraint on learner involvement in participatory planning during the actual course time, it increases the need for maximum degree of feedback and the need for flexibility of both process and substantive content. A constraint on the communication between program staff, students and faculty was the fact that while most program staff were in the office during the day, the faculty and students were rarely available at that time, since all courses were held in the evening. The efforts at evaluation, such as the midpoint evaluation and the end of the course evaluation were designed to provide formal feedback to the staff concerning the ways in which the students were able to use the material from the class, and apply it to their job situation.

Also through the nature of the various evaluation tools utilized, the message to the students was that they were expected to first evaluate their own level of competence in the areas outlined in the pre-course competency assessment, and then to assess what movement they thought they had made by the end of the course. Perhaps of more significance than the competency assessment scale was the definition of the ways in which the students had applied the course material to their own work situation. Changes in attitude, ability to conceptualize management roles and functions, and expansion of options for management behavior and task accomplishment were some of the desired goals of the program.

The second stage of program evaluation was viewed in terms of a follow-up to determine the utility of the program material over a longer period of time. The assumption was that the applicability of course material might not be immediately apparent upon completion of the program. This part of the evaluation was scheduled to begin six months after a course participant had successfully completed at least three courses. A long term follow-up questionnaire was designed which could either be sent through the mail or administered in person (Appendix E).

The goals of this stage of the evaluation related to an assessment of the applicability of the program course material to the tasks and assignments facing social workers in middle management. Even though very few of the participants in the planning survey had indicated that they would participate in a continuing education program in order to perform more effectively on their present job, the program staff decided that the courses should be relevant to the present needs of the students as well as their anticipation of mobility.

The short and long term program evaluation falls outside the scope of the project. The project evaluation focuses on the impact of the announcement of the program on the target population. The results of the project evaluation are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII

THE PROJECT RESULTS

The following discussion of project results includes the presentation of the evaluation data, its analysis, and a consideration of the difficulties encountered in the planning and execution of the evaluation.

The first objective of the evaluation was to define the impact of the presentation of the new program on the target population. Two overall indicators of impact were selected for scrutiny. The first and most important, the commitment to participate, was identified by the number of individual enrollments in the program. This provided the most direct indicator of the degree of success of the program design presentation. A minimum of seven students were necessary for each course to insure fiscal solvency for the course. Any more than seven students would provide additional resources for future program planning and expansion. The second overall indicator of impact of the program was identified by the number of individual demonstrations of interest in the program. Telephone calls, visits to the program office, requests for the brochure, were all considered overt activities demonstrating interest on the part of members of the target population. It was assumed that a percentage of those who demonstrated interest would enroll in the program at a later date. Anyone who took the time to make an overture was considered a potential participant in the program,

thus making level of interest a tangible indicator of the program presentation's impact.

The second objective of the project evaluation was the development of a profile of the members of the target population of social workers who actually did enroll in the first semester courses. This was done through the administration of a course participant questionnaire during the first class (Appendix F). The intent was to capture an image of a group at a point in time and place along their career path where their felt need for formal training in administration coincided with the availability of a new program.

The third objective was the identification of incentives and barriers to participation which would prove helpful in the future planning for the program. The combination of the profile of enrollees in the program, and the identification of incentives and barriers to participation, was expected to provide direction for refining and clarifying the program design for the coming semesters.

The project evaluation drew data from a variety of sources.

1. Levels of Program Impact

- a. Numbers of enrolled students for the first semester.
- b. Distribution of students among first semester courses.
- c. Responses to Course Participant Questionnaire.
- d. Numbers of social workers demonstrating interest in new program for the first and second semester.
- e. Numbers of social workers attending Program Orientation Meeting for the first semester.

2. Profile of Students Enrolled in First Semester

- a. Responses to Course Participant Questionnaire.

3. Incentives and Barriers to Participation

- a. Responses to Course Participant Questionnaire.
- b. Responses to Interested Non-Participant Questionnaire (Appendix G).
- c. Responses to Planning Survey Follow-Up Questionnaire (Appendix I).

Enrollment

Over 4,000 brochures announcing the new program were sent out in the late summer of 1973 (Appendix K). By mid-September when registration closed, 68 social workers had enrolled in the program filling 82 seats. One person registered for three courses, 12 registered for two courses and 55 registered for one course. This was considered an overwhelming success for the first semester of the new program. Each course had a registration well over seven, the number required for financial solvency.

<u>Course</u>	<u>Number of Students</u> (N = 68)*
Organizational Theory	14
Management Technology	13
Financial Planning and Control	15
Personnel Management	17
Information Systems	10
Direct Practice to Supervision	13
<u>Total Seats Filled</u>	82

*Some students registered for more than one course.

Of the 68 students enrolled, 40 indicated at the outset that they were interested in taking the exams in the courses for which they had registered. This was viewed by the program planners as an indicator, albeit

subjective, of possible interest in working toward the certificate. No direct questions concerning ongoing commitment to work toward the certificate were asked of the students, out of a reluctance to appear as pressuring for a commitment to further enrollment.

The importance of a large initial enrollment cannot be underestimated. While a new program must prove its worth (substantively) over time, initial legitimacy is greatly enhanced by a visible student body. Such superficial legitimacy may have substantive spinoff in student and instructor involvement and commitment and the individual course level. The expectations of program continuity and growth are also enhanced. The mutuality of exchanges among program elements, students and instructors has a base for nourishing and strengthening the overall program.

The high enrollment for the first semester was seen as important for the continued health of the program as well as the success of the first group of courses. The assumption was that the larger the pool of people who had had first hand experience with the program, the greater the potential for a ripple effect of publicity about the program to co-workers and friends. While the feedback was not expected to be uniformly positive, given the varying levels and educational needs of the participants, the size of the group made it more likely that a significant percentage would have had a learning experience which related to their educational and professional goals.

The enrolled students were asked to fill out a questionnaire at the beginning of the first class. Most of the questions related to the development of a profile of this first group of program participants. There was one set of questions which focused on the identification of

the impact of the introduction of the new program into the network of already existing, educational alternatives. The students were asked to consider if this program had not been available whether they would have participated in any other formal course in administrative areas.

<u>Student Intent</u>	<u>Percent of Enrolled Students</u> (N = 68)
Would have taken other courses	49
Would not have taken other courses	15
Didn't know	<u>36</u>
Total	100

The interpretation of this data supports the contention that the presentation of the new program was successful in making an impact on the professional working population of social workers. Those (49 percent) who would have taken a course anyway but chose to enroll in this one provided some data that the new program had broken into the network of existing resources. Those (15 percent) who said they would not have taken any other courses were presumably influenced by some aspect of this particular program to commit themselves to a formal learning experience. We may conjecture that there was some unique aspect to this program which stimulated their positive response. However within the framework of this project the numbers were too small to do more than suggest some of the attributes of the program which may have contributed to its effect on a particular population of enrolled students at a particular point in time. Of those (36 percent) who said that they did not know whether they would have taken other courses in administrative areas at this time, we may make the same conjectures.

The discussion of the characteristics of these three subgroups of the enrollees appears in a later subsection of this chapter.

Levels of Interest

The second overall indicator of program impact, demonstrations of interest, was measured through a variety of behaviors. Interest was defined as any overture toward the program by a MSW social worker which involved an identifiable activity. Telephone calls, visits to the program office, letters requesting information, return of the brochure tear sheet indicating future interest, and attendance at the Program Orientation Meeting were all considered active demonstrations of interest. Three time-limited groups were considered: those who expressed interest prior to the beginning of the fall semester, those who attended the fall Program Orientation Meeting, and those who expressed interest prior to the beginning of the spring semester. It was not the original intention to include the spring interested non-participants as a part of the evaluation. The decision to include them related to the availability of the data and the writer's curiosity concerning the impact of the new program over a longer period of time. Some, an unknown number, would have received both the fall and spring brochures, a double exposure to the program presentation. All duplication of names was eliminated from the spring semester group of overtures, a demonstration of interest.

<u>Group Demonstration of Interest</u>	<u>Number of Social Workers</u>
Fall semester overtures	100
Spring semester overtures	132
Fall Program Orientation Meeting	35

Of the 35 people who attended the Program Orientation Meeting, 15 enrolled in the fall semester. The meeting was viewed as a successful strategy for the introduction of a new program. Many questions were asked about the design and structure of the program, the value of the certificate and the transferability of credits to a doctoral program. The instructors for each class were present for the meeting and answered numerous questions posed by prospective students.

There are a number of assumptions which may be made about demonstrations of interest. Those who make an overture to find out more about a new program have some level of awareness of their need to acquire more knowledge and skills in administrative areas. Some may have been stimulated by the advent of the new program to make a move in the direction of inquiry. Some may be moved by inquiry and response to enroll in a future semester. All are to be considered potential participants in the program. However the long term effects of the program's impact on stimulating interest and consequent participation are not within the time frame of this project.

A Profile of the Program Participants

A second objective of the project was to develop a profile of the social workers who enrolled in the first fall semester set of courses offered through the new program. It was thought that the profile would create a context for the information on incentives and barriers to participation by answering at least part of the question: incentives and barriers to whom. The questionnaire was designed to elicit information about the enrollees' educational background, work situation,

factors entering into the decision to attend the program, readiness to seek other educational alternatives and agency support for continuing education efforts of staff.

At the beginning of the first session of each course each of the 67 students were asked to fill out a two-page questionnaire. One of the original 68 dropped out just prior to the first class due to health reasons. Not all students answered all the questions, however those who fell into this category usually answered all but one or two questions so their other responses were included.

Of the total group of 67 enrolled students, 75 percent were female and 25 percent were male. The students were asked when they had received their social work master's degree. Of the 66 who responded, 73 percent had graduated between 1970-1978; 15 percent between 1960-1969; and the remaining 12 percent had graduated before 1959. The relatively high percentage of students who had graduated within the ten year period prior to their enrollment led to the conjecture that one of the factors predisposing an individual to consider a continuing education program couched in a traditional educational design might be a recent exposure to the structure of a formal educational pattern.

The students were asked to identify their area of primary specialization in graduate school.

<u>Area of Specialization</u>	<u>Percent of Students</u> (N = 67)
Casework	62
Group Work	17
Community Organization	5
Administration	11
Policy	2
Other	<u>3</u>
Total	100

The high percentage of enrollees who had majored in casework was anticipated. It conforms with the traditional pattern of graduate educational background and professional interest with which new social workers enter the field.

The students were asked to cite the number of continuing education courses in which they had participated during the previous three years. They were directed to list only those which related to their work in administration. Sixty-seven students responded to the question. Of these, 22 percent of the students had taken courses specifically related to their work in administration, 11 percent thought that courses in supervision had related to their administrative work, and 67 percent had taken no courses related to their work in administration.

The students represented a broad span of fields of practice within social work.

<u>Field of Practice</u>	<u>Percent of Student Group</u> (N = 67)
Health	24
Geriatrics	19
Mental Health	18
Child Welfare	16
Family Services	13
Mental Retardation	5
Training and Education	3
Corrections	<u>2</u>
Total	100

The areas of health and mental health made up close to half of the group (42 percent). If this percentage were constant over time it would warrant some adjustment of course content and case examples to reflect field of practice interests.

In terms of levels of administrative responsibility, there was a wide span reflected among the group.

<u>Level of Agency Responsibility</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Agency Director	3	1	4	6
Project or Program Director	2	13	15	22
Administrative Support Staff or Consultant	3	8	11	16
Supervisor of One or Two Units	4	19	23	34
Direct Service Practitioner	5	8	13	20
Unemployed	--	1	1	2
Total	17	50	67	100

It is worth noting that the highest percent of enrollees were in supervisory positions. A significant number were still in direct practice, indicating an interest in anticipatory education for career mobility.

Males predominated at two levels that of agency director and direct service practitioner. Females were heavily represented at the supervisory level, and upper middle management levels. When the enrollment was looked at from the point of view of the composition of each course there was very little clustering of job levels which would permit the instructor to develop the learning material of any particular group. Only the course in Direct Practice to Supervision held slightly more students in supervisory positions than other positions, but the numbers were scarcely at a significant level of difference.

A surprising number of the students were newcomers to their present positions. Of the 62 who responded, 62 percent had been in their present position two years or less; 29 percent for three to five

years; and nine percent for six years or over. Of those who had been in their jobs two years or less, 42 percent had been in their positions under one year. When we look at those who had been in their position two years or less, in terms of their graduate school education, we find that 55 percent of this subgroup completed their master's degree ten years ago or less.

In summary, almost three times as many women as men returned for the program, close to three-quarters of the entire group had received their degrees within the ten-year period preceding their enrollment. Just under a quarter of the group had taken continuing education courses in administration within the last three years. Over half had been in their present position for two years or less. They spanned eight fields of practice, and held wide ranging work responsibilities.

The Impact of Selected Components of Program Design on Enrollment

Within the Course Participant Questionnaire, there was a set of questions dealing with the different components of the program design and their effect on the decision to enroll in the Post Master's Program in Social Work Administration.

Most of the questions in this section were designed to assess the impact of the program design and structure in terms of the students' perceptions of incentives and barriers to participation. Several questions focused on the students' personal objectives and sense of the options available for formal learning in administration. A major omission of this section and of the entire questionnaire, was a lack of emphasis on external factors, environmental constraints and influences,

or agency pressures which may have affected the students' decision-making process as much as the program design. While some of the responses did include information relating to these areas, such information was not routinely gathered. Students were asked how they had learned about the program. Of the 66 who answered, 68 percent learned about the program through the mailed brochure announcement, 12 percent learned about it through discussion with friends, nine percent saw the brochure on agency bulletin boards, eight percent in their search for continuing education courses, called Hunter and were referred to the program staff. One person picked up the brochure on the floor of the subway.

The students were asked to identify any others who might have influenced their decision to enroll in the program. The intent of this question was twofold: to ascertain whether personnel at administrative levels were influenced by recommendations of peers or superiors, and to what extent the opinions of others could be viewed as an incentive to participation. At this early point in the program's life, recommendations related to the learning needs of the individual, not the tested worth of the program.

<u>Others Influential in Decision to Attend</u>	<u>Percent of Student Group (N = 61)</u>
Agency Director	6
Supervisor	--
Director of Training	--
Another Staff Member	4
None	36
Other: Self-motivated	32
New Position	9
Respect for HCSSW	3
Lack of Supervision on Job	2
Late for Doctoral Program	
Application	<u>2</u>
Total	100

It became clear that the question was not phrased in a manner which encouraged appropriate discrimination among differential responses. Although the intent of the question was to identify significant others who were influential in their decisions to attend, the majority did not consider the role that others had played as significant. In fact they may have been insulted that the implicit assumption of the question was that it was necessary for others to be influential at this stage of their careers. A large subgroup volunteered that they were self-motivated (32 percent), as if to counter the impression that the impetus for participation might have come from elsewhere. Others introduced other factors outside the parameters of the intent of the question. However, as the question stood, it was of some value. Peers and superiors were not a major influence in the decision-making process of this particular group. The high percentage indicating that they were self-motivated provides clues that a program of continuing education in administration for this group should speak to individually perceived, learning needs. That 16 percent of the group volunteered the information that external incentives or constraints contributed to their decision, leads one only to believe that a true percentage would be considerably higher, had this question, or another, legitimated external factors.

In the search for clues to programmatic incentives and barriers to participation, a series of four questions relating to different aspects of program design was introduced. Under the headings of Program Sponsorship and Philosophy, Internal Program Design, Program Relationships and Circumstances of Program Offerings, four subareas were identified. The students were asked to rank the subareas from 1 through 4 in

order of their importance in individual decisions to participate in the program. There were a number of drawbacks to this approach. The arbitrary quality of the subgroupings at times may have forced student responses and priorities into patterns which may not have been their own. The omission of external factors may have placed an artificial emphasis on internal factors. This approach was selected because of the interest in obtaining a response to a wide variety of factors of design, and a reluctance to put them all in competition with each other.

In some instances, the instructions were not sufficiently clear and a significant number of students identified only one or two items from each subarea. In order to include this group of respondents, the responses were analyzed only in terms of the first and second ranking in each subarea.

<u>Program Sponsorship</u>	<u>Percentage Student Ranking</u> (N = 62)		
	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>
Administration taught in social work value system	74	16	88
Credential to legitimate program	19	37	57
Auspice of Hunter College School of Social Work	5	31	36
Auspice of Center for Study of Social Work Administration	2	16	18

In almost all instances the choice of first and second ranking subareas reinforced each other. While all the data or the responses in this section were tabulated by course, there was no distinct pattern which emerged except in one subarea in this section. All the students who had enrolled in the course, From Direct Practice to Supervision,

indicated that administration taught within a social work value system was of first importance to them in considering participation in the program. While this obviously was an important factor for many (74 percent) in the entire program enrollment, for this group, it was particularly influential in their decision to test out their interest in administrative areas.

<u>Program Design</u>	<u>Percentage Student Ranking</u> (N = 61)		
	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>
Opportunity to relate new learning to work	51	28	79
Individual course content	31	34	65
Coordinated learning core	15	25	40
Credential or non-credential option	3	13	16

The findings in this area were somewhat surprising. It was anticipated that the presentation of a grouped set of courses as a core would provide guidelines for a path of progressive learning in administration which would be seen as desirable. It was further anticipated that the option of a credential would have been important to the students given the planning survey responses. However, this did not appear to be borne out through the responses of this first group of students.

The third area focused on selected aspects of professional relationships which could be met through participation in the program. Only 84 percent of the entire group answered this segment of the questionnaire. By inference, we may assume that for 16 percent, the area of the program's role in fostering the opportunity to meet with other social workers in administration, be they peers, faculty or staff, was

<u>Program/Professional Relationships</u>	<u>Percentage Student Ranking</u> (N = 56)		
	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>
Evaluate own skill in relation to peers	57	20	68
Contacts with peers in administration	29	50	79
Informal contacts with faculty	9	23	32
Program orientation night to meet staff	5	7	12

not one to which they attached much importance. Of those who answered the question, it was clear that contacts with peers, whether for our purposes of comparison or other reasons, were more important than contacts with faculty or staff.

The final area dealt with in terms of the ranking process was that of the circumstances of program design. At the planning stages there had been considerable discussion as to whether the program should follow a traditional semester pattern or develop a timetable significantly different from the usual course format.

<u>Circumstances of Program</u>	<u>Percentage Student Ranking</u> (N = 52)		
	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>
Courses offered during the evening	75	20	95
Location: 129 East 79th Street	15	48	63
Course length: traditional semester	7	18	25
Trimester schedule	3	14	17

Only 78 percent of the entire group answered this question, indicating again that the area was of less interest than the two first areas of Program Sponsorship and Program Design. Of those responding, 95 percent thought that evening courses were important enough to rank first or second in this area, and 63 percent thought the location was

important. Course length and trimester scheduling were not viewed as significant factors by the majority of the respondents.

Incentives and Barriers to Participation
As Viewed by Participants in the Program

Incentives or barriers outside the program were dealt with in a summary fashion. This was unfortunate because the response to the program and the impact on the target population could not wholly be accounted for by the analysis of the data gathered. Only two facets of the external incentives were considered within the questionnaire.

The enrolled students were asked to state their objectives in participating in the program. They were encouraged to put down more than one objective if more than one applied to them. All 67 students answered this question. The most frequently cited objectives were job mobility (43 percent), improvement of performance of present job (34 percent), self development (30 percent), and a new sense of direction (19 percent). The relatively low percentage indicating improvement of job performance as an objective tends to contradict an earlier response to the question about the opportunity to relate new learning to work. There are several possible explanations for this discrepancy. The first relates to the instrument design which may have forced unreal priorities by its structure and selection of areas for consideration. A second possible explanation relates to the phrasing of the item: "opportunity to relate new learning to work." If the phrase had read, " . . . to current job" then there would have been some more concrete assurance that the responses truly referred to the present.

Mobility was clearly more important than improving the present

job performance. However, self-development was only slightly less important than improving job performance. Although self-development is a very vague term, when grouped with the other objectives it relates to a specific conceptualization of learning goals which are linked to the adult search for challenge and mastery of new areas, but may or may not be linked to the immediacy of specific job demands or specific career objectives.

It was interesting to see that 19 percent of the group indicated that they were exploring a new direction for their career path. Although this was not a large number, it had been anticipated that the program would serve as an exploring ground for some social workers who had a tentative interest in administration.

In order to assess whether there were any variations among the student groups who responded to the question about their interest in pursuing other educational alternatives, the students were divided into three subgroups. The first subgroup consisted of those who indicated that they would have (49 percent) pursued other educational alternatives in administration if this program had not been available, those who would not have (15 percent) and those who did not know (36 percent) if they would have participated in any other program. The responses of these groups were analyzed in selected areas in order to isolate any areas where the program might have made an impact on a decision, or any area where student characteristics are clustered with any particular decision.

The analysis revealed some differences among the three subgroups. Over three-quarters (80 percent) of the subgroup which would not have sought out another program in administration had been in their job two

years or less. This was significantly more than those who would have (68 percent) or those who didn't know (62 percent). In terms of goals and objectives for participating in the program, 80 percent of the subgroup which would not have sought out another program, thought that the job relatedness of the course design was particularly important. As might be expected, a correspondingly lower percentage of this group (20 percent) indicated that job mobility was an important goal for participation. Under half of each of the other two subgroups indicated that job relatedness was a key factor. The expectation was that all the members of this group would probably be registered in the Direct Practice to Supervision course. This was an erroneous assumption. Half of the group were enrolled in the Direct Practice course, the other half were distributed through the other courses.

The analysis of the student enrollees' questionnaires was done with the idea that the enrollees for the individual courses might have had different characteristics. Although all the data was tabulated in course groupings, only one course revealed any significant clustering of characteristics. The course, entitled *Direct Practice to Supervision*, was designed for social workers who were interested in broadening their perspective on the organizational aspect of their supervisory work, but were not interested necessarily in moving toward an administrative career path. It was anticipated that the course would also draw social workers who were planning to move into supervisory positions within the near future. The course was the only one offered which could not be applied toward the certificate in administration.

The students who enrolled differed from the larger group in a number of ways. A higher percentage had majored in casework. Most had

had no prior continuing education courses in administration. Two-thirds of the group had had one year or less experience in their present jobs. More enrolled in the course because they were influenced by discussion with friends than in the other course groupings. For this group, the incentive of a course which dealt with the administrative aspects of supervision, offered under a social work value system and auspice, was of highest importance. A higher percentage of participants in this course than in any of the others didn't know if they would have taken a course in administrative areas if this one hadn't been offered.

The final question in this series was an attempt to determine in what ways the enrolled students' agencies supported or facilitated their staff obtaining further training in administrative areas. All 67 students answered the question, some giving more than one response. Thirty-four percent had no support from their agencies, 34 percent had in-service training available, and 34 percent had funds available for the payment for individual courses or were allowed time off during the day to pursue training. Seven percent of the enrollees were affiliated with agencies which provided contractual arrangements for their staff to pursue their education in administrative areas.

Incentives and Barriers as Viewed by Non-Participants

One of the assumptions of the project was that some barriers to program participation could be overcome by attention to program environment, climate and patterns of communication which would clearly emphasize the program philosophy. The identification of barriers to participation was attempted through eliciting information from two groups who were known to the program but had not enrolled in the first or

second semester. The first group was composed of social workers in middle management positions who had participated in the original planning survey conducted at the initial phase of the project. All 30 members of this group were sent a questionnaire. The second group consisted of all social workers who expressed interest during the period from September 13, 1978 through February 20, 1979. This coincided with the beginning of the first semester to the beginning of the second semester. They too were sent a questionnaire. Because they had no history of cooperation with the planning of the program their questionnaire was very brief. The rationale for extending the project period to include the second group was that through an administrative oversight the group of 100 social workers who had expressed interest in the program prior to September had not been sent a questionnaire and it was felt that in January when the oversight was discovered, it was too distant in time to expect a relevant response.

Therefore, the follow-up questionnaire was sent to the 132 spring interested non-participant group. It asked them to identify their reasons for not registering for the spring semester, and to state whether they would be interested in a summer program.

Of the 132 questionnaires sent out, 37 percent were returned. Of these, 43 percent were interested in participating in the summer program. The inference which may be drawn from this response was that at least for this subgroup, the program itself did not present any internal barriers in terms of its design, content, philosophy, or structure. Timing was apparently the major obstacle to their participation in the spring semester.

Ten different areas were mentioned as barriers to participation.

They were divided into two groups: those which could be considered external to the program, and those which related in some way to the program structure or design. The latter were considered barriers internal to the program. Neither group shed much light on barriers which might be eliminated through changes in the internal structure or design of the program. The external areas mentioned in the responses to the questionnaire were: other time commitments (33 percent), travel distance (10 percent), taking courses elsewhere and family priorities (under five percent). Those areas relating to internal structure were prohibitive cost (29 percent), scheduling, day or evening, course scheduling, the questionable value of the certificate, and interest in learning only about government agencies (under five percent respectively).

For future planning purposes, it was useful to see the comparatively high percent who were deterred by cost. This was a clue that funding to subsidize individual students should be sought and overtures to agency executives to send staff might make the program more available to those who were interested in participating. Hindsight shows that a more detailed questionnaire giving people license to mention other aspects of the program which might have deterred them, might have yielded more useful data.

The next group to receive a follow-up questionnaire was the participants in the original field survey which had been conducted during the planning stages of the program one year earlier. All 30 participants in the original survey were sent the follow-up questionnaire (Appendix I), with an accompanying letter (Appendix J). Of the entire group, four had enrolled in the first semester of the new program. Of the 23 who responded but had not enrolled, 65 percent thought the program

as presented in the brochure represented their concerns, 30 percent thought it partially represented their concerns, and five percent said it did not represent their concerns at all. Those (35 percent) who thought it only partially represented their concerns, or didn't at all stressed the need for more emphasis on technical and business areas of expertise; program development, human dynamics of administration, systems negotiation, and linking the goals of management with those of social work. No more than two respondents in this subgroup mentioned any one area.

The group was asked if they thought the program would be appropriate for their level of responsibility. Eighty-three percent thought that the program would be appropriate for their level, nine percent were unsure, and another nine percent didn't think it was appropriate for their level. Within these latter two subgroups, the opinions mentioned were that the content areas belonged within a graduate level curriculum, and that a management program solely identified with social work was too narrow for administrators at their level. Although the responses were analyzed with a view toward identifying whether social workers at different levels of management would assess the program differently, there were no further clues from the data. This may have occurred because the sample was too small.

The 23 respondents were asked to identify aspects of the program design which would deter them from participating in the program. Nine specific areas were listed on the questionnaire followed by an open-ended question. The respondents were asked to identify as many areas as they thought were relevant. Of the 15 who responded,

35 percent indicated that there were no deterrents within the program design or structure. The remaining 65 percent listed the following deterrents.

<u>Deterrent Aspects of Program Design</u>	<u>Percent of Planning Survey Respondents (N = 15)</u>
Limiting participation to social workers	26
Social work auspice	17
Timing of courses	13
Location	13
Program philosophy	9
Certificate orientation of questionable value	9
Homework assignments	9
Faculty selection	9
Core curriculum content	9

When the entire group was asked if they would recommend the program offerings to their staff, 74 percent said yes and 17 percent didn't know, and nine percent said no.

In many ways this group of social workers in middle management were significantly different from the two groups of interested non-participants who had requested information about the program but had not enrolled. The smaller group had had exposure to the planning of the program and many had contributed their ideas and interests very fully at the time of the earlier survey. A perusal of their responses to the planning survey conducted one year earlier showed a remarkable consistency with their responses on the follow-up questionnaire.

The major group which was not represented among the

non-participants was the group which communicated in no way with the program upon receiving the brochure. The reason why a sample of this group was not selected for the non-participants' questionnaire was that the mailing lists used came through two sources which would not release a list of names readily. Furthermore, there was no way of knowing if a selected sample of the large pool of social workers in New York City even represented any social workers in administration. Other avenues could have been tapped, such as the mailing lists for the new periodicals in social work administration, and perhaps they will be used at a later time.

Summary

A major planning concern had been the design of a program which would be able to break through and establish itself within the already existing network of educational resources for social workers in administration. The program effectively demonstrated that it had broken through the network through showing that a significant percentage would have enrolled in some other course if this program had not been available. A further goal of the program planning and design was the stimulation of a commitment to further formal learning in administrative areas. The two groups, those who would not have taken another course in administration (15 percent), and those who did not know if they would have taken another course (36 percent), can be linked together and identified as having been persuaded by the presentation of this program to enroll in a continuing education course in administration.

The program generated considerable interest on the part of the broader social work community. A number of those who responded to the

brochure with questions during one semester, did in fact enroll in the program in a later semester. While this is an impressionistic observation and was not documented by the writer for the project evaluation (because it fell outside the time frame of the project), it was a phenomenon which confirmed the expectation that those who demonstrated interest but did not enroll, could be viewed as potential participants.

The Program Orientation Meeting was seen as a particularly valuable tool for making the Post Master's Program both visible and accessible to the target population. Just under half of the 35 social workers who attended the meeting, registered for a course in the fall semester. The opportunity for consultation with prospective students was seen by the staff and faculty as useful in terms of screening out those for whom the program would be an inappropriate educational step, as well as encouraging those for whom it was appropriate. Unfortunately, there was no documentation of the process of consultation which was carried out during the meeting.

Who were the participants in the first semester of the new program? Three-quarters of the students were female. The students spanned eight fields of practice and five levels of agency responsibility from agency director to direct service practitioner. Within each level were many different groupings of tasks and responsibilities. Close to three-quarters (71 percent) of the entire group had completed graduate school within ten years of their enrollment in this continuing education program. This could be explained by their familiarity and comfort with a formal educational setting as a context for pursuing new learning. It could also relate to their movement within the field in the direction of increased administrative responsibilities. Over half

(61 percent) had been in their current jobs for two years or less. While just under half of that subgroup had been in their jobs for one year or less.

Over half the entire group (62 percent) had majored in case-work and not quite a quarter (22 percent) had taken continuing education courses in administrative areas related to their work. The large number of fairly recent graduates many in new positions of responsibility, leads to the assumption that particular attention should be paid to graduating classes and recent alumnae groups in terms of future recruitment efforts. It was evident that a recent job change, with new responsibilities, was one of the precipitating factors for enrollment in the post master's program.

The incentives for participation existed on many levels both internal and external to the program. In terms of incentives relating to program design, the fact that the program was sponsored by an institution subscribing to social work values was an important factor influencing the decision to enroll for three-quarters of the group (74 percent). The opportunity to integrate new learning with work experience was key for half (51 percent), and just over half were drawn by the chance to evaluate their skills in relation to their peers. The scheduling of evening courses was important to three-quarters of the group.

The majority (68 percent) of the group had learned about the program through the mailed brochure. Others had heard about the program through friends (12 percent), a few had seen the brochure on agency bulletin boards, or had searched it out themselves through making independent inquiry at Hunter College School of Social Work. It would be

hoped that in later semesters more people would hear about the program through an informal communication network which would serve to supplement the impact of the brochure.

Most (68 percent) did not think they had been influenced by either their peers or superiors to attend courses. By volunteering that they were self-motivated (32 percent), they gave an emphasis to the independent quality of their decision-making process. One of the implications of this finding for the recruitment of appropriate students is that the brochure and the availability of program staff for consultation were important resources for these independent decision-makers. They needed direct communication to the program to explore its relevance to them. They were not likely to rely on the recommendation of peers or superiors.

In terms of other external incentives for entering the program, job mobility was cited by just under half the group (43 percent). This gave a sense of the desire for movement within the field, and the anticipated flow of social workers in middle management toward positions of increasing responsibility. Only 34 percent stressed the goal of improving their current job functioning. This finding was not anticipated. It was expected that a larger percentage would have been interested in improving their skills for their current job. Even among those who had been in their current jobs two years and under (61 percent of the entire group), only just under half (41 percent) had enrolled because of job related interests. Thus even the majority of those new to their jobs were more interested in mobility, finding a new direction, or self-development, than enhancing their skills for their present jobs.

While some agencies provided multiple supports for their staff to obtain training in administrative areas, 34 percent of the students received no support of any kind from their agencies. Thus agencies could be viewed as providing encouragement through incentives, maintaining a neutral stance, or presenting obstacles. None of the agencies represented by the enrolled group had presented obstacles to their participation in the program.

The non-participant groups did not contribute much information relevant to the identification of obstacles to program participation. The problem of program cost surfaced as the most uniformly important issue, and even that was only mentioned by just over a quarter of the group. Efforts should be made nonetheless, to develop resources for scholarships, and to encourage agency executives to support their staff in taking courses which would enhance their functioning on the job, and improve the service delivery systems of the agency.

CHAPTER VIII

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This report covers the life of a project in continuing education program design from the inception of the idea to the inauguration of the program. The objective was the development of a model and the elaboration of a series of guiding principles of design to foster the advance of planning knowledge in postgraduate education in social work administration. The focus of design was the presentation of a program in social work administration which would encourage social workers to commit themselves to a formal process of learning in administration.

The lack of a readily available model for a continuing education program in administration for social workers and the lack of organized interest despite a demonstrated need in the field, led to the choice of an exploratory focus of this project. The planning methodology was built around the development of a mechanism for structured communication between social work mid-level managers and the program designer. The planning goals encompassed the identification of areas of interest as well as resistance to formal education in administration on the part of social workers in middle management. Underlying the motivation for the selection of the focus for the project was the belief that attention to selected barriers to participation could result in a planning design and program strategy which would reconnect social workers to continuing educational resources in the area of program management.

Findings and Conclusions

Four key findings emerged from a series of in-depth interviews carried out with a sample of the target population. Each finding underlined in a different way, the ambivalence and aspirations of social workers engaged in administrative practice. (a) There was considerable resistance to a conceptual framework for management practice in social work which drew on particular skills and areas of knowledge usually associated with the business world. (b) When social workers moved from direct practice into administrative areas of responsibility, there was a shift in role and function within the organizational setting which created stress which was not necessarily related to the presence or lack of particular skills. (c) Among the members of the sample, there was evidence of considerable past mobility, and an interest in maximizing future mobility. (d) Interest in a continuing education program in social work administration also centered around the potential applicability of the content to the requirements of the present job. The majority of the sample group had majored in casework and were committed to maintaining some direct practice activities. It became apparent that even as this group of social workers carried out their administrative responsibilities, their original socialization to the profession often dominated their view of their work. Formal attention to sharpening management skills was seen as a departure from an earlier level of commitment to intervention at the direct practice level.

While there was documentation that each move further into administrative responsibilities and away from direct practice produced stress, close to half of those interviewed thought that the shift from direct

practice to supervision had been the most stressful. Sources of stress were identified by the respondents in personal, professional and organizational areas. Other tensions which became evident were related to the attempt on the part of a significant number to maintain a dual-directional pattern of involvement in direct service and administration. This could result in possible conflicts in organizational identification and objectives.

The high degree of mobility of social workers in middle management was a dominant characteristic of the group. Almost everyone interviewed had just arrived in their present position or was on their way to somewhere else. Transitory commitments to place and position seemed to be the hallmark of this group. Career goals reflected a similar sense of movement in many directions. It was no foregone conclusion that once in administration, a social worker would remain on this career path. The impressionistic view, gained from the survey, revealed a segment of the profession in some turmoil as its members defined and redefined career directions. While challenged by program management responsibilities, a large number were reluctant to commit themselves to a continuity of direction which would lead to significantly higher positions of administrative responsibility. The survey did not fully explore structural barriers which may have contributed to the development of this perspective, particularly among women. However, as mentioned earlier in the report such barriers undoubtedly played a role.

It was clear that any program which attempted to teach a management perspective and skills to social workers would have to stress the importance of the integration of social work values and skills

into management decision-making in a way that maintained the integrity of social work priorities. A variety of strategies would have to be developed in the planning process to address the issue of breaking down social worker resistance to a new conceptual framework of education in management practice. The program would have to be solidly embedded in a congenial educational setting for the members of the target population to risk exploring the usefulness of management theory and skills in a formal manner. Planning choices were made in the design of the program which affirmed the integration of a social work perspective within all aspects of the program. The choice of the Hunter College School of Social Work as auspice, and base for classes, the philosophical statement on the brochure, the student orientation meeting, the choice of faculty with social work degrees who were in administrative practice in the field, all represented specific decisions designed to reinforce the grounding of the program in the social welfare field.

The survey revealed that the sample group held a wide range of management responsibilities and engaged in many diverse administrative tasks. Very few of the respondents had received any formal education or training in this area, either in graduate school or following it. It was assumed that this finding was a clue to the situation within the larger population, and that for many, participation in the new program would be a first excursion into formal education in management practice. If this were so, it would signify some recognition on the part of the program enrollee of a shift in role and function, and a new identification with the issues the program represented. The planning of the program was intended to reinforce this idea. The selection of a core group

of courses as the basis for a program rather than a listing of unrelated courses, was viewed as a way of orienting students to a learning path. The corporeality of the courses when presented as a coherent body of knowledge, was intended to reinforce the legitimacy of the program and indirectly promote engagement in the learning process.

The plethora of different continuing education courses competing for consumer enrollment and the lack of systematic criteria for decision-making on the part of the consumers has made it very difficult for consumers to be assured they are making the right choices for their ongoing education. The planning survey results confirmed that the time, energy and risk involved in searching out the appropriate continuing education resource may be a deterrent in itself. The development of the core group of courses in the program under discussion was intended to provide some guidance. Not only did the design of the core provide a learning path for the potential participant, but by the formal association of the different areas within a single program, each shed some light on the scope and level of the other.

While job-relatedness emerged as an important factor in stimulating interest in participation, the dual motivation of present and future career goals provided a compelling rationale for a generic program covering a spectrum of theoretical and conceptual areas which would go well beyond the acquisition of quick problem-solving skills and techniques. Maintaining the balance and equilibrium among these areas was to prove a persistent strain throughout the course design and delivery. This constitutes one of the areas in which the design of continuing education at the post-master's level may have a more difficult series of strains than course design at the master's level. The professional

returning for continuing education courses has both the sense of immediate need emanating from the demands of daily work, as well as a sense of immediacy about future planning, stemming from a realistic appraisal of opportunities within the field. The testing of course content against the worker-student's perception of reality is insistent and incessant. Such a student takes little on faith. The master's level student is at the beginning of a new professional life experiencing both a socialization to the profession and an orientation to the reality of the field of social work practice. Expectations and demands could be expected to be very different.

The implications of the findings of the field survey for program planning were many, and justified the use of this time-consuming way of obtaining current information about a much-neglected professional level of social work practice. The value of a face-to-face interview situation was twofold: first, the exploratory nature of this aspect of the project permitted some adaptation of the questions to the interests, experience and inclination of the individual participants in the survey. Responses were more far reaching because of the immediacy of the interviewer's presence and demonstrated interest. While this breadth made categorization somewhat tedious, it allowed idiosyncratic responses to emerge.

The movement of the professional from the practice of the skills of his profession to the management of the activities of others practicing those skills, has been studied within the framework of the sociology of organizations and the professions. However, the analytic emphasis has usually been the impact of this change on the organization or the shifting balance between the attributes of functional and formal

authority. The planning survey conducted as part of this project focused on the very subjective perceptions of the social worker looking back over a career path from the point of view of the stresses encountered and the subjective impact of role changes on the professional self-image. The survey covered only a small number of social workers and the response patterns may have limited validity for all social workers, however they are suggestive in the context of this exploratory project. The four major findings which emerged: ambivalence about formal education in management, the stresses of the shift in role and function transcending skill needs, the desire for job-related course material, and the interest in transferable knowledge and skills for purposes of mobility, all provided useful guidelines for the development of program design principles.

The focus of the educational program was upgrading the level of knowledge and management skills of individual social workers. The long range goal was the improvement of organizational functioning to achieve better service delivery. A new awareness on the part of students of organizational options and strategies for organizational movement, was expected to stimulate their efforts to make changes in their organizations. A first step toward change can only occur when people change and gain new perspectives, new approaches, new analytic skills and increased confidence. The assumption was that organizations are not static, and are always in a state of flux and change. Social workers in management positions must have both conceptual understanding and practical skills to be instrumental in assessing the impact of changes and guiding the implementation of programmatic directives. Their role in making

changes relates to their capacity to use new material and insights in a strategic fashion.

The theoretical grounding for the project was complex, relating to many aspects of the program. A range of theoretical concepts contributed to the underlying structure of the program and guided the analysis of the planning survey, the development of principles of program design, the strategies of program implementation and the project evaluation. The most useful elements of the theoretical framework are highlighted in this section.

The adaptation of the sociological definition of a group to social workers in middle management was useful in the design of the planning survey and in determining approaches that might be used in the presentation of the program to the broader community. The recognition that this was a sub-group within the profession, recognized only by others, possessing a lack of cohesion, and little self-identification, gave a particular mandate to the program design. The presentation of the program had to stimulate awareness and recognition among members of the target population that they were part of a recognizable group within the profession which had special educational and learning needs. A variety of strategies relating to the establishment of the legitimacy of the educational basis for the program and the legitimacy of focusing exclusively on a loosely defined group within the profession were developed. It was anticipated that the establishment of the program would provide a focus for the increasing definition and visibility of social workers in middle management. Historically, formal education and the surrounding organizational and institutional framework, has played a role in the development of identity and cohesion of new professional

groups and sub-groups within the social work field.¹ As mentioned earlier the evaluation of the validity of this assumption remained outside the scope of the project, and would have to be a subject for further exploration at a later time.

While there was no formal evaluative effort directed toward this set of assumptions, there were clues that indicated that a more serious evaluation would be necessary. It was anticipated that the participants in the planning survey would form a nucleus of enrollees in the first semester of the program. This was based on the assumption that participation in the survey would predispose them to view themselves as members of a group of middle managers in social work, even though their ambivalence about this identification was also apparent. The exposure to a new way of conceptualizing their place within the profession combined with their active role in the selection and design of the courses for the program were factors which were expected to encourage their enrollment in the program. This did not accurately predict what happened. Although the follow-up questionnaire confirmed that the majority of the group thought the program was relevant to their professional level, only a very small number enrolled in the first semester's courses (13 percent). By the third year of the program's operation, this had risen to 20 percent. While this represented an increase, it was not a high level of commitment from this group.

The use of concepts from theories of professional socialization and role theory contributed to the understanding of the issues which might be related to role strain in the movement from direct practice into administration. The use of these theories was viewed as critical in the design of the planning survey and interpretation of

the responses. Within the literature search another perspective on roles emerged, highlighting the possible benefits which could accrue with the accumulation of roles. This provided a useful springboard toward the conceptualization of the dynamics which might both allow and encourage an individual to move into administrative responsibilities on the job as well as to engage in continuing education in the area of management practice. The importance of conceptualizing the benefits which are gained by the person who adds the student role to that of worker provided both positive linkages to andragogical theory and motives for a return to a formal learning setting, as well as cautions for the educational planner relating to the maintenance of learning and educational standards in the face of competing priorities.

The project was not designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the theoretical framework which guided the development of the organizational structure of the program. However, some mention should be made at this time of the rationale for the selection of the theoretical components which served as an underpinning to the program structure. The establishment of a new continuing education program within a professional school setting required attention to a variety of structural planning decisions which, while formally outside the definition of the project, had the potential of significant impact on the processes of program presentation to the public and access to the program on the part of members of the target population of social workers.

The use of exchange theory provided the framework for the development of a way of looking at the building of a program from the point of view of the dynamic relationships of the elements. Because the marketplace values in terms of strict purchasing power could not

be used as a primary mode of gathering the necessary resources, it was incumbent upon the program planner to search for another framework which would stimulate the assessment of other kinds of resources. Exchange theory provided a basis upon which to assess the differential types of benefits outside the market which could be bargaining factors in the process of developing a working relationship between the program elements. Exchange highlighted political, personal, professional and structural benefits in negotiations with the Hunter College School of Social Work, potential faculty, to whom only moderate remuneration could be offered, and students, for whom the program offered unproven benefits. Communication between students and the program staff were viewed as having exchange value for both groups at different stages of the program. Early questions about courses representing the articulation of needs, feedback during courses, and final evaluative comments, reinforce the recognition of essentially collegial relationships. Student roles can and do shift particularly in continuing education programs at the post-master's level, providing multi-level resources for the program. They are at once consumers, supporters, proselytizers, future faculty, course designers and constituency.

The analysis of multiple roles for faculty was facilitated through the use of an exchange model. For example, an assessment of potential boundary roles for faculty in relation to the interface with potential students, as well as potential faculty highlighted the importance of including them in different planning stages for the program. The recognition that exchange was not time-bound, brought direction and pacing to ongoing planning efforts. Anticipated returns took their place alongside of immediately received benefits.

The ability to differentiate among different kinds of exchange relationships was enhanced through a consideration of the theory of loose and tight coupling. These were useful concepts administratively for linking the dynamic elements of the program into a flexible whole, tempering and rationalizing the features of control which tended to emerge in the final planning stages. This set of concepts embraced the differential nature of working relationships and focused attention on the internal mechanisms necessary to permit flexibility and independence among program elements. A further use became evident, as the program grew, relating to the need for changes in previously established relationships formulated in terms of loose or tight coupling. Program staff relationships with faculty were potentially problematic. The initial decision was to define the relationship as one of loose coupling, allowing faculty maximum independence in course design, presentation and responses to students. This was soon translated into a plan for having a member of the program staff serve as a "liaison" and, on an ad hoc basis, sit in on selected classes. It became evident that this function was a crucially important one for the ongoing viability of the program to insure that there was a basic incongruence between the expectations of the students and the capabilities and interests of the faculty. From a concept of loose coupling the liaison role of staff moved toward a much tighter coupling which encompassed required feedback from each class, and a careful monitoring of the progression of each new course. In many respects these structural aspects of the program remained a hidden part of the program design process, unexplored and unevaluated, save for these elements which related most directly to the project emphasis on stimulation of interest and commitment.

The project evaluation indicated that a high degree of success was achieved. Social workers in more than sufficient numbers enrolled in the first semester's courses. The level of inquiries, a possible clue to future demand, gave an indication that enrollment was likely to continue at a similar level. The generally high response level suggests that demand for a program in this area did not have to be heavily documented if need were correctly assessed, the target population identified, and sufficient obstacles and incentives were accounted for in the planning process.

The profile of the participants in the first series of courses revealed that a very specific sub-group of the larger population of social workers was attracted to the program. The majority were women who had completed a masters degree within the last ten years. Over half had majored in casework and less than a quarter had taken any continuing education courses in administrative areas related to their work. Over half had been in their current jobs two years or less. Just under half cited an interest in mobility as a major objective for entering the program. Only slightly fewer indicated that the opportunity to apply new knowledge and skill in their present jobs was an important factor in the decision-making process.

Those who enrolled defined the ways in which their decision-making process had been influenced by specific factors of the program design. The elements of program design which the students identified as important in their decision-making process to attend the program were: the assurance that management would be taught under a social work auspice and consistent with a social work value base, the provision of a

structured opportunity to relate new learning to their work, and the opportunity to evaluate their own skills in relation to their peers. It was anticipated that students would be influenced by their peers or their supervisors within the agency setting to participate. However, this was definitely not the situation. Students went out of their way to stress their independence from the influence of others in making their decision to participate in the program.

Within the framework of the evaluation of the project and the assessment of the impact of different program elements on enrollment, the structure of core courses did not prove to be a major incentive for the first group of enrollees. Despite the lack of confirmation of the importance of this aspect of the program, it is the conviction of the writer that it did have an impact, less readily discernible within the dynamics of the first enrollment, but more apparent over time. In a retrospective view over the three years since the launching of the program there has been a continued high enrollment which includes a significant number of the same social workers who enrolled in the first series of courses. Fifteen have completed the core at the time of this writing and achieved their certificates. Thirty-eight percent of those who participated in the first series of courses returned to take others in later semesters from 1978-1980. It is the writer's hunch, unsubstantiated by a documented evaluation, that the presentation of a learning path at the post-master's level, through the use of a core course design may have a significant impact on the achievement of long-term stability of the program. However, the validity of this assumption will have to be assessed at another time.

Throughout this chapter, there have been intermittent insertions

of comparison between the first semester of the program and successive semesters based on the writer's continued association with the program. The elements of comparison were not rigorously selected, and related solely to types of information which had been gathered for the purposes of the project. However, it is important to note that there may be a phenomenon of delayed or cumulative impact of different elements of a continuing education program which may necessitate a suspension of immediate judgment of the value of particular program components, in favor of a more long range evaluation.

The students' goals in participating revealed that broader objectives relating to professional growth and exploration of new career options were somewhat more important to them than the improvement of their performance on the present job. This finding reinforced a similar response pattern found among the participants in the planning field survey. The implication of this lends credence to the assumption expressed earlier in this report that a social worker's sojourn in any middle management position is viewed by herself as temporary. This might serve to lessen the interest in upgrading skills for a specific job. Parenthetically, it may also have been that the students recognized that the kind of skills and knowledge sought in an educational program outside the agency should have a generic base, with wide application. Most were not financed by their agencies, leading perhaps to a greater concern with individual professional growth.

The program was initiated during a period of considerable upheaval for the profession. A constriction of resources and a loss of public support had forced agencies to make a careful appraisal of their staff needs. Pressures on social workers to acquire management skills

had increased. Social workers themselves were faced with questions as to their marketability given new frontiers of competition with other professions for administrative positions within social agencies. Thus the overall success of the program must be assessed along a variety of axes. Timing was crucial and intimately related to the shrinking resources of the field, demands for staff competence in new areas, and recognition that prior success in the clinical specialties of the field provided little support for the challenges of middle management responsibilities. Until recently the expected route for promotion within the social agency had been movement through caseworker and supervisory responsibilities into management positions. However, this route no longer provided a smooth path. A significant segment of the population attracted to the program had anticipated following this traditional route, only to find that the requirements had changed. The post-masters program in administration became a supportive educational link between two major areas of the profession; direct practice and administration. Through offering a series of coordinated courses, it provided a learning path consistent with the direction of career movement within the profession.

The inherent flexibility within the structure of continuing education, its ability as well as its need to be responsive to educational interests within the community of professionals which it serves, makes it an ideal vehicle to define and support the identification of a new career juncture. The immediate success of the program, under discussion, its substantial enrollment, was proof that a significant gap existed between the changing requirements of practice and available

educational resources. What became clear through this project is that there has been a lack of communication between practitioners in the field at middle levels of management and the educational planners in professional continuing education. Communication and planning when it does take place is usually with the executives of agencies, who may express a need for staff training, most often of a job-related nature. However, more patterns and routes of communication must be established at different levels to capture new developments in the field in order to provide support to groups who are in transitional stages meeting sharpened demands in the field.

Transferability

The project findings relating to the identification of characteristics of the target population, the principles of planning, and the design of the curriculum, are applicable to the development of new programs in social work continuing education in many areas. Specific aspects of the project such as the curriculum content and design also would have relevance for graduate level course planning in administration and management. If the program were to be repeated in a new setting, selected principles of planning would be particularly useful based on this experience. New programs which plan to focus on previously underdeveloped aspects of a professional practice should take into consideration the issues raised in the principles relating to the following areas.

(a) Planning for a continuing education program is qualitatively different from planning for a series of independent continuing education courses. Inherent in the definition of a program is the requirement of continuity and commitment over time on the part of a large

portion of the students. However, each course should also be able to stand by itself in order to provide a maximum resource to the potential participant who may not be in a position to make an extended time commitment. Relating to these two different audiences for a program places the planners and the faculty in a peculiar position, in which they have to respond to two potentially different sets of expectations and demands. The participant in a program, expecting a certificate upon completion, may have a wider tolerance for differing levels of immediate usefulness of each individual course. The individual who enrolls for a single course will have an expectation of immediate use of material and a much lower level of tolerance for its future applicability.²

(b) The early definition of sources of support for a new program should include an assessment of resources of time and staff to insure sufficient direct contact with a sample of the proposed target group to insure that both content needs and the sources of negative and positive bias can be identified. Some historical knowledge about the target population should be gathered relating to educational and organizational bases as well as their relationship to the norms of socialization within the profession.

(c) The andragogical relationship of the learners/students to the program has multiple impacts on the program design, implementation, and the scope of monitoring and feedback necessary throughout the program operation phases. The larger the role of the students in influencing the content of the courses, the greater the necessity for a consistent system of feedback through the administrative structure to insure sufficient internal consistency of content and standards of the program.

(d) It is important to recognize the value of examining possible exchanges in the planning and early implementation stages of the program as a way of conceptualizing the intersecting roles and functions of staff, faculty and students. If the concept of loose coupling is applied, it makes possible the conceptualization of strategies along a continuum of administrative support, autonomy, and control permitting clarity of assessment about strength of intervention.

(e) Within the design for the program, a planning survey performs a useful function, but there is always a role for the inclusion of expert opinion. Gibelman observes that surveys of staff needs can fall prey to time-bound issues, such as internal agency stresses, and new trends in practice which may or may not provide indicators of educational needs with a validity beyond the moment.³ In the program under discussion, the area of program monitoring and evaluation was consistently neglected by the members of the sample of the target population. The inclusion of this area within the group of core courses was based on expert opinion garnered from members of the faculty of the Hunter College School of Social Work and members of the Program Advisory Committee. In a retrospective view, the response to this course has been extremely positive, providing a beginning expertise in an area in which social workers often are inadequately prepared, and providing an impetus for the promotion of changes within selected agencies based on documented organizational problems.

The issues of selecting an appropriate auspice, breaking into an already existing network of educational programs, program legitimization, and dealing with an undefined group within a larger population, are generic problems relating to the establishment of any new

program. The principles of design developed for the program under discussion relate to the broad areas mentioned above, however they would apply to many other continuing education program planning efforts.

Future Directions

This report describing the design of a post-master's program in social work administration represents a beginning effort to document the process of planning and implementation of a new continuing education program in a new area. The major focus of the project was the identification of a series of practice principles for program design which related to different aspects of the program development. During the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of the project there emerged numerous areas warranting further exploration and work. Some of these areas are highlighted in this last section of the project report.

Increasingly our society is recognizing that the role and function of persons in middle management positions have certain generic attributes as well as stresses and strains specific to the professional field within which the manager is a part.⁴ Attention needs to be devoted to the identification of the components of middle management roles of social work to provide a greater understanding of the dynamics which make an impact on the professional social worker who accepts a position in management. Observations of social theorists, organizational analysts, the business community and social workers themselves must be coordinated to present a picture which can help in the planning of successful transitions from clinical to administrative roles. Exploration into the ways in which agencies structure their

middle management jobs and support the need for professional growth within these jobs will be important. The ambivalence evident in the responses to the planning survey has been documented throughout the professions in terms of the movement of professionals into large bureaucratic work settings where " . . . professional autonomy is eroded and new concepts of responsibility to clients must be developed."⁵ Little time is spent within the traditional educational process in defining the concepts of responsibility mentioned by Schein. Perhaps this is because management decision-making is either seen as outside the purview of professional education, or seen as an organizational extension of the professional's traditional sense of responsibility for the client within the clinical relationship. The discomfort recorded within the survey regarding career paths and continuing education in management may reflect the conflicts experienced by this group of professional social workers in their managerial roles. The limited resources of this project precluded a larger survey of social workers in administration. That was unfortunate because it leaves the findings in a very tentative state. Questions relating to stresses, conflictual situations, and potential sources of organizational or professional support deserve further exploration.

Curriculum development in administration for social workers is in its infancy. While graduate and postgraduate curricula exist they are few. Examination of the usefulness of different course groupings and materials' selection must be undertaken. Some have argued that an important part of any continuing education program in administration should include follow-up consultation.⁶ Should that always be the case? Are there other kinds of follow-up which can demonstrate the utility and

job-relatedness of an individual course or curriculum? Should a continuing education program in this area always strive for job-relatedness given the indications provided by the program under discussion that a future orientation and enhancement of job mobility may be overriding reasons for enrolling in a program? Different patterns must be attempted and evaluated on a long term basis.

Little has been written describing the options in teaching methodology available for professional postgraduate continuing education. To what extent should the approach, style and expectations be drawn from experience at the master's level? Should a course which meets one hour and forty minutes for a period of ten weeks be considered in the category of short-term teaching?⁷ Or does the fact that a student may go on and enroll in other courses within the program imply that some of the stresses to which student and instructor are vulnerable in short term teaching described by Swack and Rothman do not apply?

Principles of andragogy are gaining credence in the design of continuing education courses and discussions of teaching methodology. To what extent have they been adapted within social work educational settings at continuing education levels? How are instructors in continuing education, many of whom come from the practice field, trained to teach in the demanding area of continuing professional education? A problem germane to all continuing education and postgraduate programs is the widely differing levels of the students in each class. This program proved no exception. The responsibility of the instructor to deal with such diversity requires a considerable repertoire of skills. Since the instructors in this program were chosen from agency settings

rather than from academic settings, the expectation that they would be able to move smoothly into these teaching situations may be a false one. More thought, attention and time should go into the area of faculty development for continuing education programs for a professional group.

Students are increasingly entering schools of social work with the realization that they will be called upon to share administrative responsibilities at some point in their careers. The way that graduate school education affects the new professional's view of the breadth of social work job functions must also be examined. Within the planning survey group there were several social workers who had received their master's degrees outside of New York City. It was startling to note that their responses regarding social work roles quite easily encompassed program administration and management. None of this group mentioned conflict or stress related to social work identity or career path in administration. While this was a very small sub-group of three out of thirty, it may provide further clues that the professional socialization process needs to be examined in terms of a geographic and political environmental context, as well as in terms of other more familiar factors relating to curriculum design and emphasis.

While some schools offer courses and even majors in administration, not all students are ready, or interested in diversifying their graduate school experience too broadly. An awareness within master's level programs of the availability of post-master's work would help allay the anxiety and frustration of making choices based on either immediate interests or anticipated needs. Counseling which takes place between faculty advisors and graduate student advisees should include discussion of available continuing education courses at the time the

student is selecting courses during the second year of participation in a master's program. If these areas were routinely included in faculty advisement sessions, they could become an important part of the professional socialization process of the graduate years. Social work graduate students need to be encouraged to think of their graduate education as really providing an entry into the profession, and that there is an expectation of continued expansion and growth which may encompass further formal education. As noted by Schein, ". . . most professional education makes very few provisions for a smooth transition to professional practice or for the continuing education of practitioners." ⁸

The fact that the program under discussion did not experience the difficulty in recruitment of students which had been anticipated by the planners gave some clues to some problematic aspects of the communication between social workers in the field and the educational institutions providing graduate and postgraduate educational opportunities. It is very possible that the lack of evidence of interest in a postgraduate program in administration was due to a general lack of a channel for communication between practitioners in middle levels of management and educational institutions and their planners for continuing education. New patterns and routes for dialogue among those who are moving into the areas of program management and administration and the educational institutions in a position to supply supportive resources are needed. Schools of social work and continuing education programs have an important role to play in identifying areas where educational resources may be necessary to serve as a supportive link at career junctures and turns.

Professional needs, program needs, and services to clients are

inextricably linked. The path to the future lies in the clear awareness that without effective professional social workers at all administrative levels, the profession may lose its role in affecting policy and insuring that its implementation is consistent with social work values and goals. Those in the middle of our social agencies perform crucial interpretive and interpolating functions often forgotten in the tumult of conducting daily business. If they are not supported and recognized they will in turn relinquish these positions to members of other professions whose value stance and allegiances may reflect widely different interests. It is for this reason that continuing education programs are viewed as one of the supports vital to the stability of this level of professional work. The program which has been presented in this report represents only one approach toward postgraduate education. Diverse models of supportive intervention are needed, both formal and informal: within educational institutions and agencies, and among networks of professional peers. The findings and insights gained in this exploratory project point to the importance of diversity of effort as well as cooperation. Social workers in administrative practice need the maximum support if they are to effectively carry out their complex roles meeting professional, organizational and client needs.

Footnotes

¹Roy Lubove, The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career, 1880-1930 (New York: Athenaeum, 1971), pp. 118-24.

²Malcolm S. Knowles, "Teaching-Learning Teams in Adult Education," in Changing College Classroom, ed. by Philip Runkel, Roger Harrison, Margaret Runkel (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1969), p. 255.

³Margaret Gibelman and Beatriz Champagne, "A Consumer Information System for Staff Development and Training," Journal of Continuing Social Work Education, 1: 1 (Winter 1981), p. 25.

⁴Earl Sharris, The Oppressed Middle: Politics of Middle Management (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1981).

⁵Edgar H. Schein, Professional Education: Some New Directions (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972).

⁶James M. Kouzes and Keith W. Irwin, "Management Training That Makes a Difference," Social Work Continuing Education Yearbook, 1974-75, ed. by Michael J. Kelly and Michael L. Lauderdale (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 1976), p. 70.

⁷Lois G. Swack, "The Unique Aspects of Short-Term Teaching: How to Teach the 'How To's to the Doers,'" Journal of Education for Social Work, 10: 1 (Winter 1974), p. 90; Beulah Rothman, "Perspectives on Learning and Teaching in Continuing Education," Journal of Education for Social Work, 9: 2 (Spring 1973), p. 40.

⁸Schein, op. cit., p. 54.

APPENDIX A

PLANNING SURVEY: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Part I: Personal Background

Identification

Name: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Title of Position: _____ Year Began: _____

Department: Tel:

Agency: _____

Age: (Please check appropriate box.)

20-29

40-49

30-39

☐ 50-59

☐ 60-69

Education

Year MSW Degree Granted:

Area of MSW Specialization: (Major)

(Minor)

Did your graduate school have an administration major?

Yes

No

Present Work Situation

Indicate the number of employees for whom you have overall responsibility in the following categories:

_____	Professional
_____	Paraprofessional
_____	Clerical
_____	Maintenance
_____	Other
	TOTAL

Part II: Analyzing Job Mobility and Related Skills

We are interested in finding out what you feel are the links between the tasks and activities required on your job, and the skills which enabled you to move into your current position. This will provide some indications of the type of education and training that would be useful for others in similar situations.

1. Describe what you do on your job. (Informally, three or four sentences.)
2. Why were you given the job you now hold? (Please identify particular skills, experiences, personal characteristics.)
3. What skills have proven to be key in fulfilling the requirements of your job? (For example, planning, coordinating, controlling, information processing, etc.)

Part III: *continued*

4. Describe any major changes that have occurred within your agency during the time you have occupied your present position. (*New methodologies, techniques, staff reorganization, etc.*)

5. If the changes you mentioned have had any effect on your job and your ability to function effectively, please describe them.

6. To what extent have resources been available to assist you in learning any new skills or acquiring knowledge relevant to coping with the effects of these changes? (*Please describe how you dealt with these to acquire new competencies.*)

Part IV: Social Work Administration and Professional Identification

Our hypothesis is that a transition from direct practice to supervisory or management responsibilities raises issues in professional identification which may hinder new workers from seeking out training in management areas. In this section we are seeking to identify some of the characteristics of such a shift.

1. Were you ever involved in direct practice? How long ago?
2. Are you currently involved in direct practice? What percent of your time?
3. Do you think it is possible for you to maintain an active role in direct practice at the same time as a primary involvement in a management capacity? *(Describe any conflicts, ambiguities, or problems.)*
4. Describe any indicators of a shift in your identification as a social worker that have occurred over time. *(Do you call yourself a social worker?)*

Part IV: continued

5. As you have assumed more management responsibilities, have you sought out new sources of professional identification? (Memberships in professional organizations, attendance at conferences, friends.)
6. Describe the direction that you would like to see your career taking.
7. Do you envision any particular difficulties in achieving your goals? (Sex, age, etc.)

7. Do you envision any particular difficulties in achieving your goals?
(Sex, age, etc.)

Part V: Reaching the Middle Level Manager

The purpose of this section is to identify some of the influential factors that lead to a choice of one kind of program over another, so that where possible our planning can be responsive to the issues raised.

1. To what extent do you feel that your career development will be enhanced by further formal education or training in the area of administration and management?

2. If you were planning to participate in a continuing education/post-graduate program, what would be the factors that would influence your choice? (*Status, certificate, continuity of offerings, chance to meet peers informally, time, location, etc.*)

Part V: *continued*

3. Describe some of the obstacles you see to your participation in a postgraduate program. If you were designing such a program, how would you work around these obstacles to maximize the possibility that people like yourself would be able to participate?

Part VI: Program Planning, Content, Organization and Structure

Recent studies have shown that persons holding middle management positions are likely in any one position to utilize a wide variety of skills.

1. Please indicate in the appropriate box which of the following areas you feel are the most important for people in middle management positions.

☐ Policy and Planning

Formulating social service policies and programs
Planning strategies of implementation
Interpreting and communicating new policies

☐ Organizational Development and Change

Identifying sources of organizational stress
Recognizing potential problem situations
Selecting appropriate intervention strategies

☐ Monitoring and Controlling Social Programs

Designing and implementing information systems
Developing criteria for efficiency and effectiveness in control systems
Relating monitoring to funding and regulatory agency requirements

☐ Personnel Management

Staffing a program
Team building and leadership of small work groups
Identifying and responding to staff development and training needs

☐ Supervision

Organizing and coordinating the work of subordinates
Assessing performance and providing corrective feedback
Improving communication skills in interpersonal and administrative areas

☐ Budgeting

Understanding budgeting procedures and their effects on program
Preparing and monitoring a budget
Interpreting accounting information

☐ Issues in Middle Management Practice

Integrating management theories and social work values and practice
Organizational stress in middle management roles
Women in management

Part VI: continued

2. Do you have any comments on the organization of the content areas?
(Misplaced subareas, omitted areas, special competencies for your field.)
3. Looking at the areas you have selected, describe the most useful form in which they could be presented to you. (Structured around management case situations, applied to problematic situations in your agency, in theoretical terms, leaving you to make your own applications, etc.)
4. What do you think the most useful composition of a middle management learning group should be? (Same agency, same field, same management level?)
5. If you were going to participate in a postgraduate program in management and administrative areas, what would be your preferred
 - a. Time of year: _____
 - b. Length of program: _____
 - c. Time of day: _____
 - d. Length of sessions: _____

a. Time of year: _____

b. Length of program: _____

c. Time of day: _____

d. Length of sessions: _____

APPENDIX B
COMPETENCY RATING SCALES

Date _____

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT

COURSE Personnel Management INSTRUCTOR _____

Note: Please rate your level of knowledge in the areas listed below based on your familiarity with the current literature and experience in your administrative practice. The number one represents the lowest level of knowledge and the number five represents the highest.

<u>Knowledge about:</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Low-Med</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Med-High</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Function and operation of a personnel department	1	2	3	4	5
2. Issues of personnel policy and standards	1	2	3	4	5
3. Manpower planning, recruitment and selection procedures	1	2	3	4	5
4. Supervision and supervisory relations	1	2	3	4	5
5. Labor negotiations and relations	1	2	3	4	5
6. Issues with affect morale	1	2	3	4	5
7. Training, staff development and review procedures	1	2	3	4	5
8. Grievance procedures	1	2	3	4	5

NAME _____ (Optional)

Date _____

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTCOURSE Program Monitoring & Evaluation INSTRUCTOR _____

Note: Please rate your level of knowledge in the areas listed below based on your familiarity with the current literature and experience in your administrative practice. The number one represents the lowest level of knowledge and the number five represents the highest.

	<u>Low</u>	<u>Low-Med</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Med-High</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Knowledge of different types of evaluation designs	1	2	3	4	5
2. Knowledge of different research concepts, e.g., reliability, validity, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Knowledge of role-relationships in evaluation	1	2	3	4	5
4. Knowledge of different types of evaluation methods	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ability to design a program evaluation	1	2	3	4	5
6. Ability to construct a research instrument	1	2	3	4	5
7. Ability to analyze the findings of the evaluation	1	2	3	4	5
8. Ability to write an evaluation report	1	2	3	4	5

NAME _____ (Optional)

Date _____

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTCOURSE Financial Planning & Control INSTRUCTOR _____

Note: Please rate your level of knowledge in the areas listed below based on your familiarity with the current literature and experience in your administrative practice. The number one represents the lowest level of knowledge and the number five represents the highest.

	<u>Low</u>	<u>Low-Med</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Med-High</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Knowledge about accrual accounting	1	2	3	4	5
2. Knowledge about budgeting models	1	2	3	4	5
3. Knowledge about costing services	1	2	3	4	5
4. Knowledge about pricing services	1	2	3	4	5
5. Skill in reading financial statements	1	2	3	4	5
6. Skill in preparing a budget	1	2	3	4	5
7. Skill in financial control	1	2	3	4	5
8. Skill in conducting applied cost studies	1	2	3	4	5

NAME _____ (Optional)

Date _____

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTCOURSE Management Technology INSTRUCTOR _____

Note: Please rate your level of knowledge in the areas listed below based on your familiarity with the current literature and experience in your administrative practice. The number one represents the lowest level of knowledge and the number five represents the highest.

	<u>Low</u>	<u>Low-Med</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Med-High</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Familiarity with the terminology and concepts of management by objectives	1	2	3	4	5
2. The ability to set management goals with quantifiable indicators	1	2	3	4	5
3. The knowledge of how to apply accountability and control concepts	1	2	3	4	5
4. Understanding of how to develop management information systems as they relate to service delivery	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ability to utilize specific charting techniques such as gantt and critical path	1	2	3	4	5
6. Understanding and ability to develop all aspects of a management plan	1	2	3	4	5
7. Conceptual understanding of the key issues in project management	1	2	3	4	5
8. Knowledge of how to implement a management plan throughout an organization	1	2	3	4	5

NAME _____ (Optional)

Date _____

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTCOURSE Public Policy: Organizational Response INSTRUCTOR _____

Note: Please rate your level of knowledge in the areas listed below based on your familiarity with the current literature and experience in your administrative practice. The number one represents the lowest level of knowledge and the number five represents the highest.

	<u>Low</u>	<u>Low-Med</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Med-High</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Understanding of process of governmental interdependence	1	2	3	4	5
2. Understanding of interface between federal/state/local governments in developing local social policy	1	2	3	4	5
3. Awareness of strategies for intervention at federal/state/local levels to affect policy	1	2	3	4	5
4. Knowledge of variables affecting program development in an environment of competing values	1	2	3	4	5
5. Understanding of "political" constituency and its affect on planning	1	2	3	4	5
6. Development of analytic skills to plan strategies for change	1	2	3	4	5
7. Understanding of core components of contracts	1	2	3	4	5
8. Awareness of process of local contract letting in New York City	1	2	3	4	5

NAME _____ (Optional)

Date _____

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTCOURSE Organizational Theory INSTRUCTOR _____

Note: Please rate your level of knowledge in the areas listed below based on your familiarity with the current literature and experience in your administrative practice. The number one represents the lowest level of knowledge and the number five represents the highest.

<u>Ability to apply:</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Low-Med</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Med-High</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Knowledge of different theoretical approaches to complex organization	1	2	3	4	5
2. Knowledge of how an organization operates as a system	1	2	3	4	5
3. Knowledge of formal and informal structure in complex organizations	1	2	3	4	5
4. Knowledge of different types and bases of influence	1	2	3	4	5
5. Knowledge of different types of organizational goals	1	2	3	4	5
6. Knowledge of the principles of decision-making	1	2	3	4	5
7. Knowledge of organizational change processes	1	2	3	4	5
8. Knowledge of different approaches to organizational accountability	1	2	3	4	5

NAME _____ (Optional)

Date _____

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTCOURSE Direct Practice to Supervision INSTRUCTOR _____

Note: Please rate your level of knowledge in the areas listed below. One represents no knowledge, and five represents complete mastery based on familiarity with the current literature and experience in your administrative practice.

<u>Ability to apply:</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Low-Med</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Med-High</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Skill in utilizing different types of influence	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ability to make an educational diagnosis	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ability to do personnel evaluations	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ability to use a variety of supervisory techniques	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ability to handle resistance in supervision	1	2	3	4	5
6. Ability to elicit cooperation from other departments	1	2	3	4	5
7. Ability to handle interpersonal and interprofessional conflicts	1	2	3	4	5
8. Ability to work with volunteers	1	2	3	4	5

NAME _____ (Optional)

APPENDIX C

COURSE MID-POINT EVALUATION

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

Course Mid-Point: Job Relatedness Assessment

Please look back over the course material and class discussions to date, and consider the ways in which this course has been useful to you in your work.

Please write one or two paragraphs presenting specific examples to illustrate how you have used or might use the material from this course. For example, some courses provide concrete ways in which you may be able to improve your skill, style or approach to your job assignments and tasks. Other courses focus on increasing your ability to conceptualize and think about work issues in organizational settings. The latter may have an impact on your behavior or attitudes about your work which you have found helpful. Or they may have affected your view of your job and future career direction.

APPENDIX D
FINAL COURSE EVALUATION
POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

Semester _____

Course Title _____ Instructor _____

Please be frank and objective in your response. Omit irrelevant items. Please put all comments on the next page. We hope you will give specific examples of ways in which you have used new material.

<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Out-standing</u>
1. Knowledge of the subject	1	2	3	4	5
2. Clarity of expression of ideas	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ability to respond to student concerns	1	2	3	4	5
4. Tolerance of differences of opinion	1	2	3	4	5
5. Preparation for class	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Organization of Course Activities</u>					
6. Development of basic concepts in terms of clarity and comprehensiveness	1	2	3	4	5
7. Organization of course content	1	2	3	4	5
8. Adaptability of course to my level of experience	1	2	3	4	5
9. Pacing of the material	1	2	3	4	5
10. Encouragement of class discussion	1	2	3	4	5
11. Use of role plays and simulations when appropriate	1	2	3	4	5
12. Integration of assignments into class work	1	2	3	4	5

(Continued)

	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Out- standing</u>
<u>Course Requirements</u>					
13. Informativeness of the required text(s)	1	2	3	4	5
14. Relevance and usefulness of the suggested readings	1	2	3	4	5
15. Helpfulness of the written assignments	1	2	3	4	5
16. Appropriateness of the length and number of assignments	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Overall Course Rating</u>					
17. Evaluation of course as a whole	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Overall Learning Experience</u>					
18. Please give specific examples of how you have used, or plan to use, the material from this course in your job.					
19. What specific areas of knowledge or skill in the course did you find particularly applicable to your work, even if you cannot put them to use at this time?					
20. Please give specific suggestions for improving any aspects of the course which you have not mentioned earlier. Use back of this page if necessary.					

APPENDIX E

LONG TERM FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

Name: _____ (Optional)

Position/Title: _____

How long have you been in your present position? _____

What are the two most important tasks in your present position?

Please rank in order of importance or benefit (i.e., 1, 2, 3, etc.) the following courses that you have attended:

[illegible]

1. What new knowledge acquired in the courses did you find most helpful?

2. What improvements in your skills did you find most relevant to your present work?

APPENDIX F
COURSE PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. What year did you get your MSW? _____</p> <p>2. What was your area of primary specialization in graduate school?</p> <p>☐ Casework</p> <p>☐ Group Work</p> <p>☐ Community Organization</p> <p>☐ Administration</p> <p>☐ Policy and Planning</p> <p>☐ Other: _____</p> | <p>3. Please list any continuing education courses related to you: work in administration that you have attended in the last three years.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
|---|---|

WORK SITUATION

4. What is your current field of practice? (*Health, mental health, corrections, child welfare, family services, other.*)
- _____
- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>5. What position do you hold?</p> <p>☐ Supervisor of direct service staff</p> <p>☐ Supervisor of several units</p> <p>☐ Administrative support staff</p> <p>☐ Department or project head</p> <p>☐ Administrator for major agency division</p> <p>☐ Agency director</p> <p>☐ Other: _____</p> | <p>6. How many years have you held this position?</p> <p>_____</p> |
|--|--|
7. Please list at least four major activities of your job.
8. In relation to these activities, what skills have been the most difficult to acquire?

FACTORS ENTERING INTO DECISION TO ATTEND PROGRAM

9. How did you learn about this program?

- ☐ Mailed brochure
- ☐ Posted brochure
- ☐ Advertisement. Where? _____
- ☐ Discussion with friends
- ☐ Contacts with program staff
- ☐ Other: _____

10. Which of the following were influential in your decision to enroll?

- ☐ Agency director
- ☐ Supervisor
- ☐ Director of training
- ☐ Another staff member
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other: _____

11. We are interested in learning which aspects of the program were important to you when you were making your decision to participate. Please number the items listed under each heading from 1 (most important) to 4 (least important).

Sponsorship

- ☐ Administration taught within a social work value system
- ☐ Auspice of Hunter College School of Social Work
- ☐ Auspice of the Center for the Study of Social Administration
- ☐ Credential (certificate) to legitimate the program

Program

- ☐ Coordinated grouping of courses for a learning core
- ☐ Individual course content
- ☐ Opportunity to relate new learning to work experience
- ☐ Option of credential or non-credential participation

Relationships

- ☐ Orientation night to meet staff, faculty and participants
- ☐ Informal contacts with faculty
- ☐ Informal contacts with social workers in administration
- ☐ Chance to evaluate own skill level in relation to peers

(Continued)

FACTORS ENTERING INTO DECISION TO ATTEND PROGRAM *(Continued)***Circumstances**

- ☐ Courses offered during the evening
- ☐ Location of courses
- ☐ Course length (within traditional educational semester)
- ☐ Trimester schedule of course offerings

Other: _____

12. Please describe your goals and objectives for participating in the program (*job-related, mobility and direction, self-development*).

13. If this program had not been available, would you have pursued other educational alternatives in administration at this time?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

14. In relation to the acquisition of administrative skills, in what ways does your agency facilitate the training of its staff?

- ☐ Provides in-service training
- ☐ Makes contractual arrangements with outside institutions for training
- ☐ Pays for individual participation in courses or programs outside agency
- ☐ Allows time off during the day for participation in training
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other: _____

APPENDIX G
INTERESTED NON-PARTICIPANTS QUESTIONNAIRE
POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

Name _____

Address _____

I did not register this term because: _____

For the summer term (June 1 - July 10), I would be interested in
courses in:

**CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

129 EAST 79th STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021
212 • 570-5177

Harold M. Weissman, D.S.W.
Executive Director

APPENDIX H**LETTER TO INTERESTED NON-PARTICIPANTS**

Dear Colleague:

Some time ago you requested the Spring brochure for the Post-Master's Certificate in Social Work Administration. In order for us to improve the program, we would like to know why you decided not to register this term.

A form along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed. Your reply will assist us in meeting the educational needs of social workers in administration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Clinton
Associate Director
Post-Master's Program in Administration

APPENDIX I
PLANNING SURVEY FOLLOW-UP

POST-MASTERS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM
QUESTIONNAIRE FALL 1978

1. Did you receive the announcement for the Postgraduate Program in Social Work Administration, in the original September mailing?

___ Yes ___ No ___ Don't remember

2. In looking through the enclosed copy of the announcement, do you think it reflects your concerns about postgraduate education in administrative areas for social workers?

___ Yes ___ No ___ Partially

If your answer was No, or Partially, please explain.

3. Do you think the program is appropriate for persons working at your level of responsibility?

___ Yes ___ No

If your answer was No, please explain.

4. If you were seeking further formal education in administrative areas, please indicate if any of the following aspects of the program would deter you from participation.

___ Social work auspice	___ Participation limited to social workers
___ Program philosophy	___ Time of course offerings
___ Certificate orientation	___ Location
___ Home assignments	___ None
___ Faculty	___ Other (Please comment):
___ Selection of core course content	

5. Would you recommend future program offerings to your staff?

___ Yes ___ No ___ Don't know

If you have any general comments about the program that you would like to share, please use the back of the questionnaire.

**CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

129 EAST 79th STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021
212 • 570-5177

Harold H. Weissman, D.S.W.
Executive Director

APPENDIX J**LETTER TO PLANNING SURVEY PARTICIPANTS**

In the fall of 1977, you participated in the early planning stages of a new program to be designed for social workers who were working in administrative areas. We much appreciate the time you gave in sharing your experiences and ideas.

This September, you received an announcement of the Postgraduate Program in Social Work Administration offered jointly by the Hunter School of Social Work and the Center for the Study of Social Administration. A copy of the brochure is enclosed.

We are interested in your reactions to the program as it is presented in the brochure. We hope that you will find the time to answer the enclosed short questionnaire and return it to us. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

If you have any questions about the program, future offerings or the questionnaire itself, please feel free to call Elizabeth Clinton or Rosemarie Oliphant at: 570-5327.

We look forward to your early response as we hope to include your ideas in our spring planning effort.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Clinton
Associate Director

November 7, 1978

**CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

129 EAST 79th STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021
212 • 570-5177

Harold H. Weissman, D.S.W.
Executive Director

In the fall of 1977, you participated in the early planning stages of a new program to be designed for social workers who were working in administrative areas. We much appreciate the time you gave in sharing your experiences and ideas.

Enclosed is an announcement of the spring semester offerings of the Postgraduate Program in Social Work Administration offered jointly by the Hunter College School of Social Work and the Center for the Study of Social Administration.

We are interested in your reactions to the program as it is presented in the brochure. We hope that you will find the time to answer the enclosed short questionnaire and return it to us. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

If you have any questions about the program, future offerings or the questionnaire itself, please feel free to call Elizabeth Clinton or Rosemarie Oliphant at: 570-5327.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Clinton
Associate Director

February 1, 1979



**CENTER FOR THE STUDY
OF
SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

**CATALOGUE
FALL 1978**

**Post Graduate
Certificate
in
Social Work
Administration**

**HUNTER COLLEGE OF THE
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**



The Hunter College School of Social Work and the Center for the Study of Social Administration have developed a post-graduate program in administration in response to the growing interest in raising the standards of management practice in the social welfare field.

The program and its curriculum reflect a belief that administration is a component of social work practice rooted in the values and principles of the profession.

DESIGN

The program is designed for persons holding an M.S.W. degree. All courses involve a practice component. In order to participate fully, students will be expected to utilize their work experiences in course-related exercises and projects. Those students who do not have appropriate work experience will be expected to make use of case materials provided by the seminar leader. Simulations, models and role plays, as well as home assignments will supplement the curriculum.

The program will operate on a trimester schedule with spring, summer and fall offerings. Courses will consist of ten sessions plus an exam period.

CERTIFICATION

Certification indicates competence in particular administrative areas of study. To receive the certificate a student must take a minimum of six core courses and pass an exam given at the conclusion of each course.

As additional elective courses are taken, competence will be indicated on the certificate following successfully completed exams.

The Hunter College School of Social Work will award the certificate.

Certification is optional. Students are not required to take the examinations and may take individual core or elective courses related to their professional interests.

CORE COURSES

Organization Theory	Financial Planning
Personnel Management	Management Technology
Program Monitoring and Evaluation	Policy, Program and Governmental Relations

Each of the core courses will be offered at least once a year.

FALL OFFERINGS — 1978

Organizational Theory

Explores and compares current organizational theories. The primary focus is on bureaucratic and human relations models of organizations. Students will learn to evaluate the limitations and potentialities of various systems of decision-making, communication, leadership, control and motivation.

Instructor: Patricia Goodman, M.S.W.
Chief of Service
Bronx Psychiatric Center

Time: Monday, 5:30—7:10 p.m.

Begins: October 16, 1978

Management Technology

Explores the terminology, theories and principles of the "new management," as currently applied to social service agencies: M.B.O.; zero-based budgeting, goal setting; quantification of services; automated accountability systems. Students will learn how to use these techniques as well as how not to be used by them.

Instructor: Elizabeth Lubetkin, M.S.W.
Director, Office of Management
Planning, HRA, City of New York

Time: Monday, 7:30—9:10 p.m.

Begins: October 16, 1978

Financial Planning and Control

Principles and processes of budgeting and cost accounting will be taught as tools for program managers. The impact of these processes on an agency as well as on different levels of staff will be analyzed. Utilizing simulated materials, students will learn to employ the basic budgeting and cost accounting techniques.

Instructor: Gary Rosenberg, Ph.D.
Deputy Director, Mt. Sinai Hospital
Social Work Department

Time: Tuesday, 5:30—7:10 p.m.

Begins: October 17, 1978

Personnel Management

Examines different approaches to the problems of personnel administration including collective bargaining with unions; salary administration; fringe benefits; grievances; working conditions; recruitment; hiring; firing; training; evaluations and references; retirees and pensions. Students will learn the basic techniques of personnel administration drawn from case studies of social service and health agencies.

Instructor: David Roth, M.A. C.S.W.
Associate Executive
Director, Jewish Child Care
Association

Time: Tuesday, 7:30—9:30 p.m.

Begins: October 17, 1978

ELECTIVES

Computerized and Non-Computerized Information Systems

Focuses on the needs of an administrator in general area of information processing. Students learn various computer languages; how to deal with attitudes and concerns of personnel related to computer usage; hardware and software considerations; choosing between computerized and non-computerized systems; and simplified methods of gathering information through questionnaires and surveys.

Instructor: Edward Kagan, Ph.D.
Research and Statistics Associate,
Jewish Welfare Board

Time: Monday, 7:30—9:30 p.m.

Begins: October 16, 1978

Direct Practice to Supervision

This course is designed specifically for those in direct service who look forward to promotion to a supervisory position. New supervisors must learn to evaluate, and manage workers. Changing roles and perspectives are a constant challenge. Through discussion and role plays students will learn the basic techniques of supervision.

(This course has no exam and may not be applied for the certificate).

Instructor: Harold Weissman, D.S.W.
Professor, Hunter College
School of Social Work

Time: Monday, 5:30—7:10 p.m.

Begins: October 16, 1978

CORE COURSES

Organization Theory	Financial Planning
Personnel Management	Management Technology
Program Monitoring and Evaluation	Policy, Program and Governmental Relations

Each of the core courses will be offered at least once a year.

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Associate Executive
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(This course has no exam and may not be applied to the certificate).

Instructor: Harold Weissman, D.S.W.
Professor, Hunter College
School of Social Work

Time: Monday, 5:30—7:10 p.m.

Begins: October 16, 1978

APPLICATION FORM

Post Graduate Certificate Program in Social Work Administration.

Fall Semester—1978

Name _____

Address _____

Agency _____

Position _____

Home Tel. _____ Off. Tel. _____

I wish to register for:

- ___ Organization Theory
- ___ Financial Planning and Control
- ___ Information Systems
- ___ Personnel Management
- ___ Management Technology
- ___ Direct Practice to Supervision

Enclosed is full payment in the amount of _____

or my agency statement of commitment _____

For the future:

___ I am unable to register this term, please put me on your mailing list. I am interested in courses in the following areas:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

APPENDIX K

The Hunter College School of Social Work has as its mission the education and training of social work practitioners for leadership in service to people in need.

The Center for the Study of Social Administration is a non-profit institute dedicated to furthering the administrative knowledge and management skills of practitioners in the social welfare field through a program of research, training, meetings and institutes, consultation and publication.

Harold Lewis, *Dean*
Hunter College School of Social Work

Harold Weissman, *Director*
Center for the Study of
Social Administration

LOCATION

All seminars will be held at the Hunter College School of Social Work, 129 East 79th Street, New York City 10021.

The Faculty Lounge will be open for students one half hour before each class for informal discussion and dining.

Food may be purchased in the School cafeteria.

REGISTRATION

Courses\$150 per course
Library\$5 per semester
Certification\$5 per exam

Classes will be limited in size. Applications will be considered in order of arrival. The attached application form should be returned along with the appropriate fees no later than September 30. Applicants will be notified of acceptance and room assignments.

Full payment or written agency or union commitment to pay, must be included with the application to complete the registration process.

Please make all checks payable to:

Center for the Study of Social Administration.

Return application and appropriate enclosures to:
Post Graduate Certificate Program in Social Work
Administration, 129 East 79th Street, New York, N.Y.
10021. Attn. Elizabeth Clinton, Associate Director.

PROGRAM ORIENTATION MEETING

An orientation to the purposes and goals of the program will be held on *Tuesday, September 12 at 5:30 p.m.* in the Faculty Lounge on the fourth floor of the School of Social Work, 129 East 79th Street. Prospective students will have an opportunity to meet the faculty and ask questions about registration, course content, future offerings and certification. Students may also register at this time.

WITHDRAWAL

Students who withdraw before classes commence will be reimbursed for full fees; after the first class, 75% of all fees; and after the second class, 50% of all fees. No reimbursement can be made after the third class.

The program reserves the right to cancel courses with insufficient enrollment. All fees will be refunded.

After Labor Day, questions relating to the Post Graduate Program may be referred to Rosemary Oliphant, 570-5327 or 570-5177.

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