



**Hogg Foundation  
for Mental Health**

ADVANCING RECOVERY AND WELLNESS IN TEXAS

**EVALUATION SUMMARY REPORT  
BILINGUAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM  
FOR  
ACCREDITED SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK  
IN TEXAS**

## INTRODUCTION

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In 2008, the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health introduced a bilingual scholarship program for accredited schools of social work in Texas to increase cultural and linguistic competency in the state's mental health workforce. This statewide program was the first of its kind in Texas. Beginning in the 2008–2009 academic year, the foundation committed more than \$1 million over a four-year period to fund tuition scholarships for Spanish-speaking graduate social work students at 12 Texas universities accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. Equal grants were made to each institution, but tuition varied greatly across schools. The purpose of this scholarship program was to increase the number of bilingual (English and Spanish-speaking) mental health professionals delivering mental health services to Spanish-speaking communities throughout Texas. The scholarship program was later expanded to include other languages.

This program stressed that scholarship recipients must be fluent in Spanish and English and committed to working in Texas after graduation providing mental health services for a period equal to the timeframe of the scholarship. Other stipulations required that universities must use the scholarship funds to cover full tuition and fees for recipients but allowed funds to vary each year, depending on the number of students receiving the scholarships at each graduate school. The social work programs were also permitted to add additional criteria for selection.

During the first two years of the program (2008–2009, 2009–2010), each participating university submitted student application materials (application, narrative, language fluency assessment, essay and other evaluative data) to the foundation, and then scholarship checks were issued directly to the students. During the next two years of the program (2010–2011, 2011–2012), the foundation made grants to the universities and the award process was finalized by each institution.

In January 2012, the Hogg Foundation funded an evaluation of the scholarship program through a grant to the University of Houston – Clear Lake. Dr. Cheryl Sawyer and Dr. Michelle L. Peters conducted the evaluation. During the spring of 2012, 12 scholarship program coordinators<sup>1</sup> and 109 scholarship recipients from the participating social work programs were invited to participate in the evaluation. Program coordinators from each of the 12 participating institutions responded to an online survey and participated in a focus group along with other key staff. Forty-seven scholarship recipients (44 percent response rate) completed an online survey.<sup>2</sup> Focus groups were conducted with 41 recipients from across 11 institutions to gain a better understanding of their scholarship program experience. A focus group was not held at one institution due to logistical issues, but information was gathered from scholarship recipients at this university through telephone interviews. It should be noted that due to preserving the anonymity of the students completing the surveys, there was no way of accounting for the amount of overlap in the students responding to the survey and those participating in the focus groups. Narrative reports submitted to the foundation and other foundation documents were additional sources of information for the evaluation report.

This evaluation summary report will provide information about the scholarship recipients and the selection process, as well as highlight feedback provided by the coordinators and recipients regarding the scholarship program's strengths and areas for improvement. The findings are limited by the lack of information about post-graduation employment of recipients. Still, the feedback gained from the evaluation creates an opportunity for strategic learning through which the foundation and the institutions may improve the scholarship program going forward.

<sup>1</sup>The points of contact for each social work program varied in their roles within their programs. Some were faculty, others were staff. For the purposes of this report, they will be referred to as "program coordinators."

<sup>2</sup>Average online survey response rates are 41 percent, but vary widely. Medium-length general client satisfaction surveys with no invite incentive such as the one administered for this survey have been found to have less than a 10 percent response rate (People Pulse, 2012, <http://www.peoplepulse.com.au/Survey-Response-Rates.htm>).

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

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Twelve Texas universities accredited by the Council on Social Work Education participated in the evaluation of the Hogg Foundation Bilingual Scholarship Program. The average current student enrollment across university programs and average number of students selected to participate in the Hogg Scholarship Program was 168.3 and 9.1, respectively. Table 1 shows the number of scholarship recipients per institution from the inception of the program in fall 2008 through spring 2012.

Table 1. Number of Scholarship Recipients at Each Institution

Institution	Number of scholarship recipients	Institution	Number of scholarship recipients
Abilene Christian University	5	University of Houston	8
Baylor University	15	University of Texas at Arlington	8
Our Lady of the Lake University	5	University of Texas at Austin	8
Stephen F. Austin State University	6	University of Texas at El Paso	6
Texas A&M University – Commerce	9	University of Texas – Pan American	17
Texas State University	15	University of Texas at San Antonio	7

## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

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### Demographics

A purposeful sample of 109 students who were 2008–2012 Hogg Foundation Bilingual Scholarship recipients were solicited to participate in the evaluation. Surveys were sent via the program coordinators to as many of the recipients as could be electronically located. Foundation evaluation staff followed up via email and mail to recipients for whom they had contact information. A total of 47 participants responded to the survey.

The representation of recipients across academic years in which they received the scholarship was as follows: 2008–2009 (15 percent), 2009–2010 (38 percent), 2010–2011 (40 percent) and 2011–2012 (49 percent). Participants were instructed to mark all of the years in which they received the scholarship. In recounting how they heard about the scholarship program, the most frequent responses were: program website (26 percent), program application materials (23 percent) and written advertisement or email (21 percent).

Of the 47 respondents, the majority of the participants were female (87 percent). With respect to race, 75 percent identified as White (16 percent as “other,” 7 percent as “Bi- or Multiracial”), and pan-ethnically 73 percent identified as Latino/Hispanic. Ethnically, 58 percent of the respondents identified as Mexican, Mexican American or Chicano. The majority of respondents were from the United States (83 percent). The primary language spoken at home for the majority of respondents was Spanish (62 percent), and an advanced level of Spanish proficiency was reported in most cases: writing (37 percent), reading (48 percent) and speaking (48 percent). However, an intermediate-advanced level of Spanish proficiency in writing, reading and speaking was also reported with some frequency—35 percent, 39 percent and 39 percent, respectively. Scholarship recipients most often reported that their parents had a high school education or less (father 52 percent, mother 63 percent), but some did report parents completing a bachelor’s (mother 19 percent, father 9 percent) or post-graduate degree (father 11 percent, mother 11 percent). Remaining responses included: “trade school,” “did not attend school,” “unknown” or “other.”

## Selection Process

Although schools varied in the composition of the selection committee, all had members of the school of social work and Spanish language-proficient faculty. Over 90 percent of the students were accepted by selection committees. Former scholarship recipients or former graduate social work students were on several selection committees. At least three institutions included bilingual agency or community members on the selection committee to determine proficiency in both the language and culture. “[We appreciate that this] decision making power is given to the universities and to the departments. They (Hogg Foundation) trust that we know our students best.”

All of the universities used a standardized selection process. Although some universities used a formal rubric, the majority of the universities described a more informal process that easily narrowed the applicant pool to “the cream,” according to grades and GRE scores. One program coordinator commented, “We are very picky and they must meet GPA, GRE, and essay [standards] or we don’t choose them. We [also] look at the letters of recommendation.”

Survey data confirmed that 50 percent or more of the universities required an English writing sample (58 percent), a minimum GPA (75 percent), a personal interview in Spanish (92 percent), and an admission team recommendation or decision (75 percent) to be considered for admission into their program. Approximately 63 percent of the universities reported requiring a minimum GPA of 3.0 (overall mean GPA = 3.1).

An understanding of Latino culture and an interest in working with Latino communities appeared to be an underlying expectation considered along with other criteria for the scholarship. Roughly half of the programs considered prior experience in working with the Latino community as a crucial component of the selection process.

All students were accepted into the social work program first and then considered for the scholarship. Most students were given rankings associated with their scores. Many schools reported that low GPA scores were expected to be offset by high GRE scores. Most universities selected only those students for their program who demonstrated motivation and aptitude for social work. Students receiving the scholarship were expected to commit to working in a mental health environment for a time period equal to that for which they received the scholarship.

## Assessment of Applicants' Spanish Language Ability

All applicants were required to demonstrate oral proficiency in Spanish and were expected to be able to professionally communicate with potential clients in Spanish. Most of the applicants were expected to demonstrate reading and writing proficiency as well. Unique approaches to language assessment included conducting an interview and psychosocial assessment in Spanish and then translating the interview into English. Other applicants were expected to review the code of ethics and orally explain portions of the code in both English and in Spanish.

The evaluation team assessed a voluntary sample of self-selected scholarship recipients ( $N=16$ ) to confirm their level of oral Spanish proficiency. They were evaluated through a telephone conversation with evaluation staff using a rubric created by faculty at Baylor University (see Table 2). Based on the information gathered during the telephone interviews, all participants scored between a 3 and 5 on both aural comprehension and speaking ability, with a mean of 4.43.

Table 2. Rubric for Evaluating Aural and Oral Spanish Proficiency

Aural Comprehension	Speaking Ability
1 = None	1 = None
2 = Limited to slow, uncomplicated sentences	2 = Can only frame structurally simple, short utterances
3 = Understands simple conversation	3 = Uses basic grammatical structure, speaking with limited vocabulary
4 = Understands conversation on simple academic topics	4 = Uses structural patterns, but not with consistent accuracy; adequate to handle conversational subjects
5 = Understands sophisticated discussion of academic topics	5 = Has control over structural patterns, can handle a wide range of conversational situations

### Perceptions of Program Impact

Table 3 displays survey participants' responses about various aspects of the Bilingual Scholarship Program at their institution. The table collapses responses into three categories: Strongly Disagree/Disagree, Neutral and Agree/Strongly Agree.

Cohort experience perceived as valuable. Sixty-six percent of those who responded to the survey reported having a valuable cohort experience. Greenlee and Karanxha (2010) found that students who participated in a cohort experience, compared with those who did not, reported a stronger sense of collaboration and empowerment. The authors cite previous research that demonstrated that students who participated in cohort experiences reported increased social capital, better relationships with faculty and a deeper sense of community, and that cohort experiences have been connected to improved academic outcomes (as cited in Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010).

Focus group participants who reported being part of a strong cohort model shared that it recreated a family-like environment. *Familismo*, or strong sense of family closeness, is a predominant theme in Latino culture (Santiago-Rivera, Arrendondo, & Gallardo-Cooper, 2002). One student stated, "I'm comfortable walking up to any of my professors, bothering them, their doors are always open. Friends, classmates, field professors...we learn together and I know they'll be there." Several scholarship recipients voiced similar sentiments. Five students commented that they did not have a cohort experience and indicated that they would have liked to be part of one.

Mentorship experiences were varied. When students were asked if they received the support needed to be successful in their programs, the responses varied. In some instances, the students felt highly supported because they were provided Spanish-speaking mentors and faculty that were knowledgeable about the Latino culture. Latino faculty provided academic direction and personal advice on multiple levels. In their study of a group of Latino students in Texas entering graduate programs, Luna and Prieto (2009) found that participants reported increased networking, a greater appreciation of the requirements needed to be successful in graduate school and a sense of empowerment from having been assigned a faculty mentor. Furthermore, they cite past research in which students who have been mentored report stronger academic self-efficacy and greater satisfaction with their academic program, among many other demonstrated educational benefits such as increased retention and higher grade point averages (as cited in Luna & Prieto, 2009).

Approximately 32 percent of participants agreed that they had the opportunity to work closely with a mentor, while 48.9 percent disagreed that this opportunity was available to them. Participants who reported not having a mentorship experience said that they felt frustrated and desired additional support. They voiced their concerns about the lack of Spanish-speaking mentors, while others reported that their assigned mentors paid them little attention. "Working with bilingual clients, there is such a need...but I feel like I'm doing this all alone sometimes."

Table 3. Scholarship Recipients' Perceptions of the Scholarship Program

	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	Neutral	Agree/Strongly Agree
1. Being a part of a cohort was a valuable experience	0.0	27.7	65.9
2. Used Spanish as part of training program	4.3	6.5	82.6
3. Received clinical supervision in Spanish	57.4	6.4	19.2
4. Felt prepared to deliver mental health services in Spanish	8.5	25.5	63.8
5. Felt prepared to deliver culturally competent services to Latino clients	2.1	12.8	83.0
6. Provided opportunities to learn about delivering services in Spanish in addition to the activities specifically related to the scholarship program	29.8	19.1	48.9
7. Learned about effective interventions for Latino clients	19.1	17.0	63.8
8. Became more familiar with external resources necessary for me to advocate for Latino clients	10.6	17.0	72.3
9. Provided adequate opportunities for external professional growth	8.5	23.4	66.0
10. Opportunity to work closely with a mentor	48.9	14.9	31.9

Note: The survey included six possible responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree and Not Applicable. The categories have been collapsed here for ease of reporting. The Not Applicable responses are not included, thus the responses do not total to 100 percent. Uncollapsed results are included in the full evaluation report and are available from the foundation.

Experiences in being prepared to deliver culturally and linguistically competent services were varied. For the most part, it appears that scholarship recipients felt prepared to deliver both mental health services in Spanish and culturally competent services to Latino clients – 64 percent and 83 percent agreed/strongly agreed, respectively. In support of these responses, 64 percent of survey participants reported that they learned about effective interventions for Latino clients. Approximately 25 percent of the universities offer classes that specifically concentrate on Latino culture and their attitudes and beliefs concerning mental health. One program requires the scholarship recipients to take an Evaluación e Intervención en Español course, which is entirely in Spanish and is specifically designed to enhance cultural and linguistic competency in social workers. As part of the course, students practice clinical interventions in Spanish through taped role plays with trained bilingual actors. They receive feedback on their clinical and Spanish language skills and also engage in discussion of any relevant cultural aspects to address as part of the therapeutic intervention (Acosta, 2012). Another program has a Social Work Practice with Latinos Specialization which includes courses focusing on clinical and community practice with Latinos and practice with immigrant communities.

Some institutions without a Latino specialization in their MSW programs were making initial efforts to provide students with experiences to strengthen their cultural and linguistic competency. One program reported offering multiple 90-minute seminars on topics related to bilingual mental health practice. Each scholarship recipient selected a relevant research article and provided a written analysis and oral presentation to their peers in Spanish. In addition to a rich discussion of the literature, these sessions allowed scholarship recipients to develop and practice technical and professional social work Spanish language skills. Another program reported that students met with a professional

bilingual mentor twice a month to enhance their proficiency as a Spanish-speaking mental health practitioner. Two programs were going to be launching summer study abroad programs, one in Costa Rica and the other in El Salvador, to provide students with both a Spanish immersion experience, as well as an opportunity to learn about the delivery of social services in a Latin American country.

Despite these efforts being made by some institutions, other MSW programs lacked such experiences for students or activities were restricted to isolated events or conferences, some with an outward focus on the community and not with a sustained focus on building the competency of the scholarship recipients. A few students commented that many of the effective interventions with Latinos that they learned were taken from their field experience placements and not during their academic coursework. One student reported, "Most of my experience in learning effective interventions was from field experiences or my own research, not from academic components of my MSW program."

Furthermore, less than half of the respondents indicated that they were provided opportunities to learn about delivering services in Spanish in addition to the activities specifically related to the scholarship program. The experiences of the students likely varied, as some of the institutions' social work programs had more of an emphasis on serving Spanish-speaking clients depending on their location, the needs of their communities, and the expertise and interest of faculty. This, together with the response that the majority of survey participants disagreed or strongly disagreed (57 percent) with the statement, "I received clinical supervision in Spanish (supervisor spoke Spanish during supervision) at my field placement," and only 19 percent agreed or strongly agreed, raises an important issue: is the scholarship program's partnership with the social work programs producing culturally and linguistically competent bilingual mental health providers, or is it producing social workers who are bilingual?

It can be challenging for students to conduct clinical work in Spanish, as they try to translate English-learned concepts into therapy. It becomes even more challenging when they have to translate that session back into English with a supervisor, receive feedback and support in English, and then have to take that input back into their Spanish-language work with the client (Verdinelli & Biever, 2009). Some students indicated that they would have liked to have materials that defined English terms in Spanish vocabulary as well as opportunities to debate the refinement of such terminology. "I wish I would have had more training in Spanish technical terms. I am fluent in Spanish but I have not had experience in Spanish technical terminology." Assisting students with field-specific terminology in Spanish has been discussed in the literature as being helpful in the development of their linguistic competency (Biever, et al., 2002; Castaño, Biever, González, & Anderson, 2007).

### Workforce Impact

One disappointing aspect of the evaluation was that almost none of the students who participated in the evaluation agreed to have a survey sent to their employer, contact information for graduates was limited in some cases, and methodological issues with the employment questions (discussed below) limited the ability to clearly capture a picture of workforce impact. The foundation was especially interested in the emerging outcomes that the scholarship program is having on the mental health workforce in Texas.

In order to respect privacy standards regarding students' contact information, current and prior scholarship recipients were contacted through their social work programs, not directly by the evaluators. The Hogg Foundation conducted a follow-up invitation via email and regular mail to recipients for whom they had contact information (these being the students who received the scholarship in the first two years of the program when the foundation was involved in directly issuing scholarship checks). In those cases, there was an understanding that the foundation was being provided with the students' information.

However, even when the scholarship recipient responded to the survey, they had to voluntarily contact the evaluators to provide employer contact information for a separate survey to be sent out to the employer. As mentioned before, almost no students opted to participate in this part of the evaluation.

Part of what the evaluation revealed is that there was a misunderstanding by recipients and a lack of clarity on the foundation's part about the type of "mental health services" employment that was considered acceptable for fulfilling the post-graduation service requirement of the scholarship program. There appeared to be concerns that if the employment did not fit the expectations, the loan might need to be repaid. These misperceptions may have contributed to recipients being unwilling to participate in the employment information/employer survey aspect of the evaluation. Additionally, while participants were welcome to review the employer survey beforehand, and it was carefully worded to focus on workforce information and not performance appraisal, early career participants may have felt uncomfortable calling attention to themselves in the workplace. Finally, there also appeared to be gaps in the availability of contact information for former scholarship recipients.

The foundation has already taken steps to remedy the post-graduation employment expectations by rewording the language about this expectation on the agreement signed by the recipients and adding additional information and examples about what is considered "mental health services." Consistency in the collection of contact information for graduates is also being addressed. The foundation hopes to follow up on this part of the evaluation in the future to see if workforce outcomes can be captured.

All this being said, we can glean some limited workforce information from the evaluation. Of the 47 recipients who responded to the online survey, 17 reported that they had attempted the state licensing exam, and of those, 100 percent of them responded that they had passed. Therefore, it appears that the students being funded by the scholarship program are well-prepared to obtain the necessary credentials to practice in the field. Table 4 shows that 57 percent of survey respondents reported that they are currently "working in the mental health field," and of these individuals, 57 percent strongly agreed or agreed that they are utilizing Spanish in their work.

Table 4. Working in the Mental Health Field

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>1. Currently Working</b>		
Yes	27	57.4
No	13	27.7
Not Applicable	7	14.9
<b>2. Utilize Spanish</b>		
Strongly Agree	19	43.2
Agree	6	13.6
Neutral	1	2.3
Disagree	1	2.3
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Not Applicable	17	38.6
<b>3. Types of Services in Spanish</b>		
Counseling	15	31.9
Case Management	28	59.6
Translation	20	42.6
Interpretation	20	42.6
Not Applicable	13	27.7

Note: For #3, participants were instructed to "Mark all that apply."

Due to the survey question, the workforce data is limited. The question was phrased as, "Are you currently working in the mental health field?" and did not include a clarification of this being post-graduate work. This is a methodological

limitation. The limitation to this data is that without the follow-up statement mentioned above, we cannot be sure that these are graduates. These respondents likely include students working part time while attending their programs or students who considered fieldwork placements as “working” when responding to the question. Triangling two other pieces of information, that 17 students reported passing the licensure exam and 25 students reported receiving the scholarship in 2008–2009 (seven students) and 2009–2010 (18 students), may help us to approximate a picture of the workforce impact thus far. However, we cannot be sure that those who passed the licensing exam are not among the 20 who reported that they are not working in the mental health field or the 39 percent who responded “not applicable” to utilizing Spanish in their work.

### Perceptions of Program Strengths

All of the recipients were extremely grateful for the opportunities associated with the scholarship program. Unanimously, they expressed their sincere appreciation for the support provided as part of this opportunity.

Financial support reduced the need for loans and outside employment. When scholarship recipients were surveyed about their ability to attend graduate school without the financial support from the Hogg Foundation, 53 percent reported that they still would have attended, but would have taken out student loans to pay for graduate school. On the other hand, 32 percent of the recipients claim that the lack of financial support would have delayed their education. The results of the survey data were further supported by the focus group data.

Overwhelmingly, the Hogg scholarship recipients expressed gratitude for receiving such a substantial gift to support their education. The majority of the students were first-generation graduates who came from low-income backgrounds. Although their families were emotionally supportive, financial support was not available. Student comments such as, “My family’s support for me is minimal because they don’t have money,” and “No one in my family had even been to college much less [received] a master’s. My family [will] not have to worry about financial debt,” supported the concept that family-based financial support was not available.

Other students took out loans for their bachelor’s degrees and have accumulated a substantial amount of debt prior to starting the master’s program. The comment, “I’ve survived on loans so far and I fear more loans. With Hogg I can focus on school without having to ask myself, ‘Is it worth it to put my family in such financial stress while I am in school?’” emphasized some students’ fear of getting more deeply into debt. Many of the students voiced having major financial responsibilities that limited their ability to successfully complete a master’s degree. The scholarship allowed students to concentrate on their studies and relieved some of the stress of financial burdens. “The Hogg scholarship gives me peace of mind and allows [me] to study. It gives me the confidence to do the best I can,” voiced one student. The financial relief provided students with the gift of time. Working a job takes time away from class preparation, family, and academically-based community involvement that would enhance their overall educational experience. “Without the scholarship, my grades wouldn’t be there,” said one student.

Many of the students were focused on their financial status after graduation. Knowing social work is not a lucrative career, many feared not being able to repay loans after graduation. The scholarship provided them a level of financial security and eased their fears. “Doctors will make six figures when they graduate and we won’t. We might not ever be able to pay back that much money,” said one student. Another student added, “The payoff for a social work job is not going to be good...I was afraid to take out any loans.”

Being recognized as a scholarship recipient was professionally beneficial. The universities are diligently working towards acknowledging the academic achievements of the scholarship recipients. At one university, scholarship recipients are going to be identified as “social work ambassadors” and serve as representatives in the community, organizations and churches. Several universities acknowledge or recognize “Hogg Scholars” in various capacities at graduation. One student remarked, “Being identified as a Hogg Scholar has opened doors for me.”

Multiple program components were meaningful. Focus group discussions highlighted the diversity of students' experiences. Some of the focus group participants excitedly discussed their research about working with Latino clients while others described mentorships and networking opportunities that would lead to lifelong associations. The scholarship also gave students the ability to attend the National Association of Social Work (NASW) state conference; without it, most would not have been able to afford to take part in this professional development opportunity. "The [scholarship program] also provided me with faculty who have served as mentors throughout my first year in the [social work program]. It was because of the [scholarship program] that I felt compelled to attend my first NASW conference."

The dedication to providing bilingual services was central. Multiple scholarship recipients mentioned how important working with clients with limited English language skills was to their learning experience and dedication to the field of social work:

"What I found most beneficial was the opportunity to advance my education and offer services to those that are in need of services in their own language. I have seen how much of a barrier language can be in my profession as a social worker and know the importance of communicating with a client in their own language. Clients have the right to receive services in their own language and to know that I am able to offer services to these clients in their own language; the Hogg scholarship has given me this privilege."

"Receiving the Hogg Scholarship really challenged me to maintain my Spanish skills while in grad school because I knew I had made a commitment to use them afterwards. I found a language partner to speak Spanish with once a week while in grad school, and actively sought field experiences, etc. that would give me the opportunity to use Spanish. I don't know that I would have been so diligent had I not made this commitment."

"[This opportunity has helped me to find] inspiration to help me advocate for a population I feel is largely disadvantaged in Texas despite them being a large percentage of social work populations that we serve."

#### Perceptions Regarding Need for Scholarship Program Improvements

The Hogg Foundation scholarship recipients had various perspectives about the program and provided some recommendations for improvement. This feedback was drawn from focus groups, interviews and survey data. Comments varied from suggestions to modify program restrictions to requests for networking and professional development opportunities.

**Increase networking.** Scholarship recipients requested improvements in networking and relationship building opportunities among fellow scholarship recipients and faculty, both during their time in the master of social work degree (MSW) program and after graduation. One student requested more "community and support" among scholarship recipients and thought that bringing them together was "great." Another student reported feeling afraid that other students (who are not scholarship recipients) would think badly of her and expressed a strong desire to connect with fellow scholarship recipients. Other students mentioned a need for support once they graduated from the program, especially with regard to mentorships, job searches and listserves for connecting with other Latino social workers.

**Increase collaboration.** Many scholarship recipients expressed a desire to collaborate more closely with the Hogg Foundation, communicating with program officers and researchers. Some scholarship recipients mentioned that enhanced communication could increase their knowledge of post-graduation expectations, such as updates about current job status. Additionally, students expressed a desire to network with Hogg staff to gain support in their job searches so that they can more effectively adhere to the foundation's expectation that they serve Spanish-speaking clients.

While this request for increased collaboration was directed at foundation staff, it appears there may be a misunderstanding by scholarship recipients of the foundation's role and scope as a funder. It seems that the underlying

theme of these comments centers around the desire for increased mentorship, which would likely be best accomplished at the institutional level.

Allow flexibility in funding usage. Some universities chose only to award scholarships to full-time students. Although all students were grateful to receive the Hogg Foundation scholarship, students at these institutions thought that the requirement limited their ability to meet their personal financial needs. One student mentioned that the requirement of attending the MSW program full-time was really difficult because of having to work to support the family. The student wished the scholarship would have permitted part-time attendance so that it would have been possible to work. This feedback must be balanced by the students who felt that receiving the scholarship reduced the burden of having to work while attending graduate school.

The Hogg Foundation stipulated that scholarships could only be utilized for tuition and required fees. One student commented, "We couldn't get the social work lab because we were receiving the Hogg Scholarship for tuition only. We should be able to use the Hogg scholarship in conjunction with the social work lab so that we can combine our financial aid resources."<sup>3</sup> This issue was also noted by program coordinators.

Some students commented that some candidates were excluded from consideration for the Hogg scholarship because of the foundation stipulation that scholarships could only be offered to new students.

Advocate for the field of social work. Many scholarship recipients felt that the field of social work as a profession needs more recognition. Many scholarship recipients agreed that more effort should be put forth in marketing the services social workers can provide. "People don't know what we do and how we can help. It's not that they don't value our services—they don't even know what we can do," said one student. Another student expressed concern that the field of social work had a negative connotation attached to it: "Being a social worker has a stigma associated with it. People associate it with CPS [Child Protective Services]."

Provide more opportunities for professional development. The students indicated that they need access to studies by others, research opportunities and professional workshops that serve Latino clients. The Hogg scholarship recipients requested professional workshops related to Latino issues and supervision in Spanish to enhance vocabulary since some concepts do not translate. In addition, the scholarship recipients requested that the foundation consider creating webinars to address culturally appropriate responses to crisis scenarios that may occur with Latino clients. While 66 percent of the recipients responding to the survey reported that the scholarship program provided adequate opportunities for external professional growth, it appears that this was a component that was experienced as very beneficial and that recipients would like to see strengthened.

## PROGRAM COORDINATOR FEEDBACK

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### Goals of the Scholarship Program

It is worth noting that program coordinators' responses to the question, "What do you think is the goal of the scholarship program?" were quite varied. Some coordinators mentioned reaching underrepresented students; others said the goal was to give Latino students the opportunity to achieve professional goals; still others cited the demand for Latino social workers. The range of responses highlights the need for clarity about goals when designing and implementing a scholarship program such as this one. Goals drive processes and therefore, it is likely that the understanding of the goals influenced both the selection processes and implementation of the scholarship program. In 2008, the Hogg Foundation's original goals for the program were to raise public awareness of the need to build the state's bilingual mental health workforce, and simultaneously to begin to meet that need. When the program changed in 2010 from direct scholarships to

<sup>3</sup> This program had an arrangement in which students could work in the social work lab in exchange for tuition remission.

students to a grant awarded to schools of social work, the additional goal of building cultural competence and diversity in higher education programs for mental health professions was added. It is notable that the original goal of meeting the need for more bilingual mental health service providers in the state did not note their development as culturally and linguistically competent providers, but only highlights that they are bilingual. As noted in previous sections, it appears that the cultural and linguistic competency aspect of the scholarship program is in need of continued development, and this may be a reflection of the cultural competency goal being added later in the development of the program, and the linguistically competent goal being absent altogether.

#### Perceptions of Strengths of the Program

Program coordinators from all 12 institutions participating in the scholarship program responded to the survey and participated in a focus group with other key staff. In addition to their role as points of contact for their programs, all of the coordinators reported that their roles included the creation and submission of regular updates to the Hogg Foundation. Seventy-five percent of the coordinators also helped author or co-author the original proposal that was submitted to the foundation. About half of the coordinators reported that they were members of the scholarship selection committee.

Program fulfills the need for financial support. Program coordinators felt that the scholarship program reaches underrepresented students and provides financial support for deserving students. Additionally, it was reported that the funding gives students the opportunity to reach their professional goals of helping the Latino population and increases Latino social workers in a field where there is a high demand. As stated by one coordinator, "Our students are actively involved in the community because they are able to go to school full time and not work."

Students are involved in the community. It was reported that Latino, Spanish-speaking faculty, field supervisors and community members are able to mentor students, meet with students, and help them to gain a deeper understanding associated with serving this historically underserved community. "We create opportunities for the students to be involved in the community," said one coordinator. Program coordinators shared that scholarship recipients were able to participate in round table discussions over pertinent topics with Hispanic leaders who spoke of challenges in immigration, healthcare and education. "We are strengthening our connections with agency-based people to create a more diverse community workforce. Our internships are of high quality because [the agencies] value the Hogg scholars," said one program coordinator.

Research opportunities are available. Nearly all students were offered the opportunity to attend the NASW conference during the year(s) they received their Hogg funding. Some students were able to present their research at this conference. Other students were involved in grant writing. At some universities, scholarship recipients reviewed written reports and became more familiar with published literature on issues and challenges in social work practice with Latino clients. At some institutions, the scholarship program afforded students the opportunity to conduct research on Latino issues in social work, thus expanding the body of knowledge about the community that they serve. One program reported that scholarship recipients played a central role in organizing and planning an annual conference on delivering bilingual mental health services which attracted 150 presenters and attendees from Mexico, Texas and New Mexico. Other schools provide support for students to present their research at conferences in and outside of Texas.

Numerous advantages were associated with the scholarship program. Both students and faculty were appreciative of the advantages associated with participating in the scholarship program. The scholarship program brought positive attention to the universities' MSW programs and helped create links and collaborative ventures with community-based organizations (see Table 5). Several universities have utilized this attention to enhance field-based opportunities and to create networking relationships that have resulted in additional financial support for their students. The introduction of Spanish-speaking scholars into some of the programs has helped many of the universities better understand the needs associated with training Spanish-speaking students and provided opportunities for the revision and enhancement of standard course content.

Table 5. Advantages Associated With the Scholarship Program Most Frequently Reported by Coordinators

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1. Increased student enrollment in the MSW program	4	33.3
2. Increased bilingual student enrollment in the MSW program	7	58.3
3. Increased attention to the university's MSW program	9	75.0
4. Increased collaboration with organizations interested in supporting the Latino community	10	83.3
5. Faculty and staff gained knowledge related to training bilingual social workers	9	75.0

Note: Participants were instructed to "Mark all that apply".

#### Perceptions Regarding Need for Scholarship Program Improvements

Clarification regarding post-graduation employment expectations would be helpful. There was significant confusion among the program coordinators and scholarship recipients regarding the post-graduation employment expectation of providing "mental health" services. Most of the universities do not maintain lists of graduates and where they are working after graduation. The coordinators need clarification related to any requirements associated with the documentation of graduated students (contact information) and their post-graduate job assignment, and have requested guidance from the foundation as to how to address the issue. One coordinator asked, "What if they can't find a job in mental health?" This issue is addressed further in the "Workforce Impact" section on page 7.

Consideration of varying tuition costs across universities would be helpful. The foundation required that students receive 100 percent tuition for both years of the MSW program, with a maximum amount of \$22,000 per student (\$11,000 per year) allocated to each university. When the grant program began in 2008, the foundation awarded two scholarships to each institution. In 2010, additional funding was awarded to each institution to increase the number of scholarships and to extend the program until 2013. Tuition costs varied greatly across the various public and private universities, with some costs exceeding the \$11,000 annual maximum. Several program coordinators commented that the grant provided a significant amount of funding but did not meet total tuition costs for multiple students. In these cases, where tuition prohibited giving multiple full scholarships, schools could either choose to give a smaller number of scholarships or have the remaining tuition costs be absorbed by the department. In some cases, where universities did not require students to be full time, meeting full tuition and fees for part-time students also stretched the funds.

One private university indicated that although the Hogg Foundation had contributed a significant amount of scholarship dollars, the university had contributed roughly \$450,000 in tuition and fees in order to meet the full tuition stipulation. However, in this case, it was the foundation grant that enabled the institution to access additional institutional funds.

Flexibility in utilizing funds. Other coordinators expressed concern that the scholarship recipients sometimes had to forgo other available funds because the Hogg funds could only be spent on tuition/fees. One coordinator asked, "Could Hogg scholarships be allocated toward living expenses in lieu of tuition? Some students have other tuition-based scholarship opportunities but cannot use them as the Hogg scholarship pays only for tuition."

Flexibility regarding professional development would expand opportunities. Program coordinators indicated that they would like for some of the Hogg Foundation professional development funds to be available to support sending students to a national Latino mental health-oriented conference so that they can present their research. Others suggested that funds be allocated for professional development sessions to be held on a state or regional level. Still others commented that there should be time allotted in the state conference program for scholarship recipients and other

students to attend professional development sessions related to Latino culture.

Standardized report format would save time. The time factor involved for faculty to mentor and do paperwork can create a problem as reflected by one coordinator who said, "Reports are time consuming and we're short staffed." Some coordinators suggested a more standardized format that could be presented in bullet or short form as a remedy for this issue. Faculty members who serve as mentors are usually assistant professors who are pressed for time, so there is limited time to provide mentoring and support.

#### Program Coordinators' Perceptions: Sustainability of the Program

Every university has pondered the challenge of sustainability, i.e., "Where and how can we build upon the Hogg's generosity and thus expand this program?" Several universities have formed sustainability committees, either on a program-wide or university-wide basis, and retained sustainability resource specialists. These committees serve to identify potential funders, potential community-based committee members, and best methods for collaboration with university and community programs for resource development. Additionally, the committees may be tasked with carrying out the sustainability plan and working towards continued scholarship efforts for future years. Sustainability plans across institutions include:

**External Funding:** Most of the universities are approaching other foundations, state or federal grants as a means to gather financial support for bilingual scholars. Two universities leveraged the Hogg Foundation grant as a pathway to apply for and subsequently receive large grants to support the sustainability of their scholarship programs; one was a regional foundation award, and the other was a multi-year, federal grant.

**Agency collaboration:** Several universities have been approaching agencies that need bilingual social workers to see if they will sponsor the education of a bilingual scholar. This concept proposes that the agency will financially support a bilingual social work student as they move through the program. Upon conclusion of the program, the bilingual social work student would agree to work with the sponsoring agency for a designated length of time.

**Professional development opportunities:** A few universities offer regularly scheduled professional development opportunities for practicing social workers. Proceeds from the registration fees associated with these opportunities are being channeled into a student scholarship fund. For instance, at one university a "mental health week" event is held each year and funds from the workshop registration go to the program scholarship fund.

**Alumni and university support:** Leveraging institutional contacts and development support has been successful for most participating universities. By partnering with other departments and the university-wide development office, institutions have been able to reach a larger pool of funders. Some activities have included a university phone-a-thon with alumni and designated university fundraising days for the "Bilingual Scholarship Program for Social Workers." Other efforts include approaching university/social work program alumni through annual meetings, breakfasts or receptions. Most universities have planned gatherings with alumni to garner financial support.

### LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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This section serves to highlight themes that emerged across scholarship recipients and program coordinators or that were reflected strongly in the survey or focus group responses, but is not intended to be inclusive of all the feedback contained in the summary report.

Increased cohort and mentorship experiences are desired. Both the survey and focus group data clearly indicate that cohort and mentorship experiences were highly valued and there is a desire for additional activities in this area, or for the initiation of these activities where none were offered. Cohort experiences appeared to provide support, a sense of

community and the opportunity for learning from peers. Mentorship experiences increased networking opportunities and provided valuable professional information.

Increased resources for developing competency as a bilingual service provider are needed. Preparing a bilingual social work student to become a culturally and linguistically competent mental health provider involves more than simply ensuring the student is proficient in Spanish and completes the MSW degree. Because there are many field-specific terms and concepts that are difficult to translate both linguistically and culturally, specific attention to these issues is needed for students to be able to competently translate their English-language education into services that will fit the needs of the Latino communities of Texas. Being able to utilize professional development funds to arrange for supplemental Spanish group supervision for scholarship recipients, where individual Spanish-speaking supervisors are not available, would be helpful in this learning process. Support for strengthening students' knowledge of technical terms in Spanish is also needed. Additionally, the evaluation highlighted the need to grow the institutions' capacity for supporting the students' linguistic competency in order to increase the chances of programmatic sustainability.

Flexibility in professional development opportunities may expand students' learning experiences. While funding to attend the NASW state conference was appreciated and the experience was beneficial, allowing professional development funds to be utilized for attendance at conferences focusing on Latino mental health issues would expand learning opportunities for students and may open up additional avenues for presenting research.

There are programmatic and grant management issues that the foundation may wish to consider. The feedback from students at universities that required a full-time course load was mixed. Someone thought that along with the funding, it created a situation where they did not have to work, while others viewed the full-time situation as creating a condition where they could not work. There were also reports from both students and program coordinators that more flexibility in the application of funding, beyond tuition and fees, would be desirable and may open up the possibility of coordinating other funding. The foundation may wish to explore whether flexibility in the use of the scholarship funding makes sense going forward, and universities that required scholarship recipients to be full-time may also want to revisit this requirement.

Gathering workforce impact data was a challenge. Clarification regarding post-graduation employment expectations is needed. As noted above, the foundation has already begun to take action on this finding. Hopefully, this clarification will increase graduates' willingness to share their employment information. Furthermore, it is important for the institutions to partner with the foundation to track the students after graduation so that the workforce impact of the scholarship program can be measured.

The evaluation highlighted the need for clarity about goals and outcomes when designing and implementing a scholarship program. Program coordinators had differing perceptions about the goals of the program and the foundation's goals evolved as the grant program progressed. Because goals drive processes, it is likely that the understanding of the goals influenced both the selection processes and implementation of the scholarship program. The clarity of the need to develop the cultural and linguistic competency of the students emerged from the evaluation and offers an opportunity to bring the grant activities in line with that goal.

Streamlining the narrative report process and making it uniform across institutions may allow coordinators more time for valuable program activities more closely related to serving students.

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