

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

of the

Graduate Training Program of the Adult Probation Department
of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia and the Temple
University Graduate School of Social Administration
Probation Department #PH-153-73A

Prepared and Submitted by

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EVALUATION LOAN X

MAJOR EVALUATIONS UNDERWAY OR COMPLETED IN YOUR SPA

Project or Program being Evaluated:

Grant Title: (PH-153-73A) Graduate School Training
(include grant number)

Grantee: Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas

Brief Description: This program is designed to upgrade services
(both project and evaluation effort)
offered by the Probation Dept.

Scheduled date of final Evaluation Report: 6/3/74

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If completed, is Evaluation Report on file with NCJRS? yes no

Please mail completed form to:

~~Keith Miles~~
Office of Evaluation
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Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

GRADUATE TRAINING PROJECT

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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SECTION I. SUMMARY STATEMENT

A. Aims: The objectives of the Graduate Training Program undertaken jointly by the Adult Probation Department (APD) of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia and Temple University Graduate School of Social Administration (TUGSSA) were as follows: (1) To upgrade the services of the APD through an increase of trained supervisors; (2) To motivate more probation officers to pursue additional training; (3) To attract superior personnel; (4) To increase the efficiency of the APD.

B. The Program: To carry out these objectives the following program was initiated and is in operation by the APD and TUGSSA: (1) Ten selected probation officers are now in attendance at the TUGSSA. Five graduated in May 1973, having attained M.S.W. degrees. (2) Arrangements for these "academic leaves" are as follows: Each accepted candidate receives ninety percent of his or her annual salary during the two years of training. However, they must work during the summer months at APD and must return to work in the Department for a two-year period after graduation. (3) Some graduate students in the TUGSSA are assigned to do their field work in the APD under the supervision of a Temple University Field Work instructor and are paid during the summer period when they work full-time for the Department. Twenty-nine graduate students have been assigned to the Department since 1971.

C. Major Findings and Results: From all indications the APD objectives in the main have been met: (1) Personnel with M.S.W. degrees employed by the APD have increased from 13 in 1971 to 23 in 1973. Ten professionals with M.S.W.'s have applied and been employed, besides the five who graduated in 1973. (2) Women professionals have increased from six in 1971 to 19 professionals plus 8 paraprofessionals in 1973. This increase in women is attributed by the administration to the attraction of superior supervisory personnel (through GTP) and the diminishing of negative attitudes on the part of social workers towards occupations in corrections. (3) Restructuring of the Department, placing M.S.W.'s in the strategic and key positions is a change, which might be attributed to the GTP. (4) The introduction of a planning model for the Department and a new method of selection of supervisors have produced a more manageable case load and a more productive ratio of one supervisor to six probation officers. (5) A recent development is the production of manuals,-- a judge's manual, a probationer's and a parolee's management.

A policy and procedural manual is now in the process of development. (6) Increased volunteer services and use of para-professionals who were formerly parolees or probationers. (7) There has been great value in the placement of social work graduate students in the Department for their field work. They contributed improvement in service delivery, in work assessment, in relationship with communities, and have developed an internal resource manual as well as a resource directory. That ten members of this group of students have joined the Department as full-time workers and others have entered correctional fields is proof enough that the placement of graduate Temple University field work students has been a real asset.

D. Conclusions and Recommendations: (1) The GTP has in most instances met expectations and the relationship of the APD and TUGSSA should therefore be continued. It has proven to be an excellent mutually beneficial relationship. (2) I would urge that the evaluation process should also be continued, not only to obtain more reliable data, which neither time nor the meagre sample permitted at this time, but also to help the Department in more accurately assessing the performance of its probation officers and its supervisors. This should eventually lead to greater service accountability. (3) The probation officer should be given the training now provided for those who will become supervisors. Because he has person to person, face to face relationships with his clients, he can put to direct and practical use social work training, which can provide him with the skills, insights, and sensitivity so essential to the worker involved in the rehabilitation process. It should also be kept in mind that the number of supervisory and administrative positions are limited in the Department and that the road to promotion for supervisory roles will have less appeal. Ways should be explored in motivating the probation officer to seek training in order to improve his own functioning. (4) The close relationship between the Department and TUGSSA can become an important channel whereby research programs can be continued and new theories and innovations in the field of social welfare applied to the work of the Department. Temple University in turn should examine its role and perhaps achieve greater flexibility in meeting the special requirements of probation officers; More courses in psycho-social aspects of personality; courses related to probation, such as the nature of the court and the criminal justice systems; developments in criminology, etc. The present cluster courses and bi-weekly continuing education meetings are not sufficient. The "service delivery tract" as presently required of all those in the project should be modified for the second year and probation related courses expanded. A special field in social work may have to be designed for the training of social workers in probation, as has been made possible for others in school social work, medical social work, etc.

SECTION II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

1. Needs and the Problems to be Alleviated

a. The APD of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia has a serious lack of professional manpower and therefore cannot perform its functions efficiently to serve as an alternative to incarceration or as a preventor and reducer of crime. It especially has a need of supervisors, trained and qualified, who could in turn convey or share their acquired skills and knowledge with the line probation officers they supervise.

b. The ratio of supervisors to line probation officers is too high and must be lowered for a more productive and manageable ratio of six officers to one supervisor.

c. The organization of APD needs tightening and restructuring.

d. There was a recognized need by the APD to become associated with a graduate school of social work, as a resource for professional talent, as well as a means of keeping abreast with development and research in the field.

2. Specific Objectives of the APD

a. Increase the number of qualified and trained supervisors who hold MSW degrees, to enable the department to reduce the current ratio of probation officers to supervisors to a more productive and manageable one. The recommended ratio is six probation officers to one supervisor.

b. The trained supervisors would greatly facilitate and expand the professional growth of line probation officers.

c. The GTP will help to attract new qualified people to the Department.

d. This program will also provide the incentive to the currently employed officers to seek additional training.

e. Placement of graduate students into the Department for field work will generally enrich the overall effectiveness of the Department through exposure of regular department members to new techniques and ideas. This may also serve as a source for possible future supervisory personnel for the Department.

3. Objectives as Perceived by the TUGSSA

The objectives of the project as perceived by the TUGSSA were as follows: To provide a graduate professional social work education for probation officers from the Adult Probation Department of the Philadelphia Common Pleas Court towards preparation to assume supervisory and staff development responsibilities through a Master's curriculum in Social Service Delivery, based in generic social work values and technologies; providing a knowledge and practice base specific to the field of corrections and criminal justice.

4. Project Activities

There are three components in the program:

a. Of the fifteen who were selected (since 1971) and have attended, five have graduated, receiving Masters of Social Work degrees in May 1973.

b. Field placement of these probation officers in training during the summer was at the Adult Probation Department on a full-time basis under the supervision of a Temple University field work placement coordinator.

c. TUGSSA graduate students were placed for field work in the APD (10 in 1972-3). Six of this group worked full-time on salary at the APD during the summer months.

5. Conditions were as follows:

The probation officers in training must, after receiving their degrees, return to the APD for two full years of employment in whatever capacity they are assigned. All those probation officers on academic leave in attendance at Temple University receive 90% of their annual salaries during the two years of the training program.

In the three years since the GTP was initiated, forty-three probation officers applied. Fifteen were admitted to the program. Five graduated. The attrition rate was low--one left the program for law school; two dropped out for personal or family reasons; one was rejected by Temple. All those who left the program were replaced by other eligible probation officers.

6. The selection process was as follows:

A selection committee representing a broad spectrum within the Department, with the Director of Training as the Chairman, applied the following criteria:

- a. Officer's essay
- b. case records
- c. supervisors evaluation
- d. Interview with the graduate Selection Committee

Scoring procedures were developed and each of the applicants was ranked in order of the average total score which he received for all four areas. This information was then submitted to the Chief Probation Officer, who followed the recommended rank order of the selection committee.

The Selection Committee was later broadened to include a greater number of the actual decision makers in the Department, while still

drawing representation from all areas. This committee has just begun to meet to re-examine its selection criteria. One major difference this year is that all probation officer applicants must first apply and be accepted by the School of Social Administration individually. Twenty persons have completed their applications and will be processed by the selection committee.

SECTION III. EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

1. The Evaluation--Original Aims, Methods and Limitations:

Information and data sought to reveal changes favorable or unfavorable which resulted from the GTP included:

a. Impact on professional and technical growth of the department--knowledge and skills gained or refined by the training experience of those who became supervisors and the diffusion or sharing of such knowledge and skills.

b. Utilization and placement of returning officers.

c. Program improvements and innovations, increased departmental efficiency and staff development.

d. Effect of a changed service pattern on client behavior.

e. The curriculum, the effectiveness of the TUGSSA program of studies and the extent to which it met its goals.

f. Unforeseen by-products of the program.

2. Limitations:

At the very outset, it was recognized that the application of evaluation techniques will be circumscribed by several factors:

a. Smallness of the sample--only five probation officers have completed the program.

b. Lack of measuring instruments or established criteria of performance of either supervisors or the probation officers in their units or of the effectiveness of the new approaches upon the clients they serve.

c. Shortness of time did not permit (1) setting up of control groups with which to compare those exposed to training and those they supervise with a group of non-trained supervisors and those under their charge:

(2) nor did time permit a nation-wide survey of similar programs in other graduate schools of social work; (3) nor allow for a before and after testing of participants.

3. Evaluation Methods and Recommendation:

We have relied heavily on in-depth interviews of individuals and groups of all those directly or indirectly affected or involved in the project. Enough data has been secured and judgements from a variety of viewpoints collected to arrive at viable conclusions and a fair assessment that can provide some directions for the future. We urge the continuation of the evaluation process, utilizing the methods indicated above, not only to overcome the limitations cited, but also to arrive at more objective and tested results that can better gauge the effectiveness of superior personnel and new methods in probation to make it more productive.

4. Documents Studied:

Frederick H. Downs, Jr. PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF THE PROBATION
Chief Probation Officer DEPARTMENT GRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAM

Adult Probation Department
Court of Common Pleas

Prepared by the Research and
Development Adult Probation
Department

March 1973

- Objectives for Redistricting June 21, 1973
- Charts of Organizational Structure as of June 1973 and December 1973
- Proposed Reorganization Plan September 1973
- Questionnaires for Summer Placements
- Questionnaire for First Year Department Students

--Questionnaire for Second Year
 Department Students
 --Programs of Study--Temple University
 Graduate School of Social Adminis-
 tration.

5. Interviews Conducted

<u>Date</u>	<u>Purposes</u>	<u>Participants</u>
May 17, 1973	Goals and Methods of GNP as perceived by the Faculty of the GTP of TUGSSA	TUGSSA Faculty; Dean Simon Slavin Asst. Prof. A.E. Wilkerson Asst. Prof. Don Hamilton Prof. Ruth Middleman
September 13, 1973 September 28, 1973	Nature of the programs and departmental studies	Research and Development Staff of the APD: Marilyn Slivka Arlene Sing Henry Rossman
November 2 and November 19, 1973	Purposes of the department in setting up the program, expectations and the result of the program	Frederick H. Downs, Chief Probation Officer
November 16, 1973	Purposes of the department in setting up the program, expectations and the result of the program	William Derringer, Asst. Dir. of Field Services
November 26, 1973	Purposes of the department in setting up the program, expectations and the results of the program	Steve Peeples, Planning Coordinator Ernest Krall, Research Coordinator Henry Rossman, Research Coordinator
November 30, 1973	Reaction of the graduates--their experience in school and on the job upon their return	Bill Benzig Tony Brown Frank Eaverly Michael Green Harriet Smith

<u>Date</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Participants</u>
January 6, 1974	Reasons for not applying for the program. Reaction of probation officers under differing supervisory methods.	Trish Galaway Bill Nagel Mary Linial Joseph Ridgeway Gary Cenna
January 7, 1974	Point of view of student representation in the program.	Patricia Foster Planner for Graduate Training
January 10, 1974	Reaction of department heads who supervise supervisors who graduated.	James Taylor Robert Williams Frank Eaverly John Clark
January 11, 1974 January 25, 1974	Faculty summation of the GTP experience.	Asst. Prof. Don Hamilton Asst. Prof. A.E. Wilkerson

SECTION IV. PROGRAM RESULTS AND ASSESSMENTS

I. Results--Gains Anticipated:

The results achieved have been on target in most instances.

a. The number of staff members with M.S.W. degrees increased from nine in 1971 to 23 in 1973.

b. The graduates of the GTP have move easily into positions of greater responsibility as supervisors or administrators.

c. The project has acted as an incentive in influencing probation officers in the department to apply for training. The number applying has increased each year.

c. The placement of graduate students for their field work with the Department (29 since 1971) has been a most valuable asset to the Department. Ten have become employees after attaining higher degrees, others have entered related correctional occupations. The students have also contributed several innovative programs to the Department.

e. A reorganization plan which has been currently instituted may be ascribed to GTP and its influence on the APD as a whole. Those with M.S.W. degrees have been placed in prominent and key positions. The extent of improvement which these organizational changes will bring about cannot be assessed at this time since the program is on-going and only a future study will reveal its effectiveness at the administrative level.

f. Other innovative features and new ideals which have been introduced have made the work of the Department more efficient. These are, more intensive use of volunteers; the employment of former parolees and probationers as para-professionals; the development of several manuals for different staff levels including the courts; improvement at the line

officers level, such as converting an address verification into a family visit and family situation report; improved case management and the reduction of the ratio between supervisor and probation officer to six to one, thus, improving productivity.

g. Field work time spent in other institutions has given the graduates an inside view in the operations of other agencies and organizations so that now they can view their own work in clearer perspective, be better able to use community resources and make improved referrals. The graduates report that since their return, they not only have worked much harder but now more highly motivated and dedicated and see themselves in a more crucial social role.

h. It should also be noted that the faculty reported on the excellent progress made by all the probation officers in the program. They were not only superior students but had a salutary influence on the other students.

2. Unanticipated Results

a. What has not come through sharply and unequivocally is the assumption that the new learning on the part of the supervisors will trickle down and influence the probation officials whom they are supervising. This question is still to be answered. Has the work at the probation officer's level been improved? As I indicated above, the smallness of the sample and the lack of time, as well as the inavailability of testing instruments make it impossible for a value judgement on this process at this time.

b. Probation officers who did not apply for the program report a decline of incentives. They expressed the fear that their investment of four years might lead to a blind alley. Since supervisory and administrative openings in the Department are limited, they fear that they might be training

for jobs which would not be there when they graduate. Some feel that a school of social work may not provide the total need for professional training of probation officers. They prefer concentration in related disciplines such as counseling or clinical psychology. Still others would prefer to remain as probation officers and not move into either administrative or supervisory positions. They would prefer to continue training to improve the work they do now in their direct relationship with their clients.

c. The TUGSSA curriculum is a three track system.¹ The probation officers who entered the program were compelled to move into the "service delivery tract". While the courses in this tract served well for the first year, the objections and complaints included the lack of an adequate number of electives permitted the trainees during the second year; the need for more probation related courses such as the legal aspects of

¹"The Temple University GSSA's major concern is with educating students who will be responsive to the social change imperatives that grow out of the inadequate functioning of the major social institutions of our times, and particularly with the organizational and structural change-demands of the current health, welfare, and correctional systems.

The school offers a three "track" system which conforms to the major ways in which practitioners apply their skills in professional practice. Tract I (Social Planning and Community Organization) views practice from the vantage point of the system as a whole--its policy development, its planning, collective action for its change, and administration of its services. Track II (Social Delivery) views social work practice from the point of view of the system of delivery of individual, family, and group services. Track III provides second year students with a special area in organizational administration.

It is intended that students concentrating in Social Service Delivery develop a longitudinal view of service to clients, one that sees a client from the point of access to the service delivery system through the process of social re-entry. Students become sensitive to the essential task that the client and worker must recognize and accomplish, and are helped to develop the skills to enable them to respond professionally demands." (From Subgrant Proposal.)

probation, analysis of the court system, more courses on criminal justice, more on supervision, planning, administration, and especially psychosocial aspects of personality.

d. At this point, it was difficult to judge the adequacy of the curriculum. The GTP is innovative, and few graduate schools of social work have programs that are as closely related to a probation department, according to the brief survey I have made. Courses are offered in various schools to aid those in corrections, but none have the kind of arrangement entered into between Temple University and the APD.

3. The Impact that the Results have had:

The problems as highlighted in the proposal are real. The need to reduce crime, cut down recidivism, assist in the rehabilitation process of the parolee and the probationer are large orders. Whether these aims have been met is not only difficult to measure, but impossible to ascertain because of the multiplicity of variables and the paucity of instruments to make such measurements. It would take more time and research to assess the results and the effectiveness of this program on the general problem of crime and how the program has aided the criminal justice system. We have to assume, however, that goals which have been met through this program will, in general, produce better qualified staff that will humanize its relationship with probationers and will thus, hopefully, produce better results. We must make the same assumption that we do in other fields--that a well-trained and more qualified physician will do a better job for his patients.

4. Achievement of Program Goals:

Considering the limited objectives as stated in the proposal, GTP,

in my judgement, has in the main met its goals and marks the beginning of a most fruitful and valuable relationship between a service agency and a training institution, in the same way as a hospital gains by having a medical school attached to it.

5. A Comparison of Results:

As indicated earlier, I found no projects comparable to the GTP. However, there should be more experimentation with other disciplines besides that of social work, such as counseling and clinical psychology. In view of the resolution made at the National Conference on Crime and Delinquency in San Francisco, social work still remains the discipline closest to the work of the probation officer. We need further studies to test this assumption. Still, there is no doubt in my mind that the new interest displayed in the work of the probation department by Philadelphia social workers stems from the new relationship developed by Temple University and the APD.

6. The Cost and Money Savings:

The lowering of costs in the criminal justice system cannot be calculated on the basis of this experiment. Society has to make up for long neglect in the training of its probation officials. We again must fall back on the assumption that a trained person will do a more effective job in working with offenders in the diversionary aspects of the work as well as at the parole and probation level and that such trained workers will be more effective and therefore in time will reduce recidivism and its cost to society. It is a gain that will accrue to society in the long run and should not be calculated on a short term basis.

SECTION V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To Continue GTP Experiment with Built-In Evaluation and Testing Components

The GTP has demonstrated that a linkage by a probation department with a school of social work will increase the number of qualified personnel and add other invaluable resources that make the department more effective. However, since definitive and conclusive evidence cannot at this time be obtained, the continued program should have built-in evaluation and testing procedures. These should aid in ascertaining the extent of the diffusion and sharing of learning between the supervisors and their line officers. Control groups should be established to compare supervisors and those under their charge who have been exposed to training, to those who have not been exposed.

2. Conditions for an Academic Leave

The conditions established in operating GTP are valid and necessary. The mixing of academic learning and practical experience should produce the best results. The learners are soundly motivated. However, its success depends on an adequate stipend. Those granted academic leave are usually older and may already have family obligations. They cannot take academic leave unless they also have a livable income, no matter how strong the inducements and availability of opportunity. However, those granted such privileges should have more than one year experience.

3. Educating the Probation Officer and Rewards for Good Performance

Attempts should also be made to bring into the program probation officers who do not wish or are not suited for supervisory or administrative positions. Those who are in constant face to face contact with parolees

and probationers need additional training most of all. Ways of stimulating motivation, through salary raises or higher status designations, should be developed to make growth on the job rewarding, and means of measuring professional growth on the job should be explored.

4. Potentialities for Future Development

The APD should identify, classify and synchronize the jobs of its professionals. The APD should also take cognizance of the need for required administrative changes if the newly incorporated MSW's into its organization can work more effectively. There is need to allow more time for the supervisors as well as the probation officers under their charge for more frequent and longer contacts if the new learnings are to be disseminated and put to use. (I have heard complaints from probation officers under the supervision of the newly trained supervisors that they now have more paper work to do, and hence less time for their clients and for personal contacts with their supervisors.)

The schools of social work also need to analyze more carefully the role and place of probation in the criminal justice system and its special characteristics, which imply structural and curricular changes. The school should consider the limitations imposed by the court system; the role of the judges; court and other legal procedures which circumscribe the probation officer's time; the multiple reporting requirement; hours spent by the officers during trials; criminological and correctional aspects peculiar to probation; specialized knowledge needed in the fields of addiction, mental and emotional aberration, etc. It may be necessary to set up a new discipline in the social work field, titled "Probation Social Work", such as School Social Workers, Medical Social Workers, Psychiatric Social Workers, etc.

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