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Social Work Faculty and Graduate Student Perceptions of a One-Year Residency Program: A Phenomenological Perspective

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Social Work Faculty and Graduate Student Perceptions of a One-Year Residency Program: A Phenomenological Perspective

Abstract
Research shows that there is an increase in working professionals returning to social work school but are ill-prepared to give up their jobs to attend school full-time to obtain their master's in social work degrees. The purpose of this case study analysis was to explore the perceptions of social work graduate students and faculty members within a model known as the One-Year Residency (OYR) Program on the east coast using both focus groups and interviews, respectively. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach with a purposive sample, the study focused on discovering the graduate students’ and faculty perceptions about (a) the OYR Program in general, (b) the capabilities of graduate students to take and pass the licensure exam, and (c) the graduate students’ preparedness to enter the social work profession as licensed professionals. Data collected from eight social work graduate students using three focus groups and from four faculty members using individual interviews focused on their perceptions of the OYR Program. The findings from both data sets revealed the importance of the OYR program to working professionals but also showed the void of human resources to address concerns about the program, preparation for the field placement year, and readiness to take and pass the social work licensure exam. Both students and faculty recommended the need to strengthen the OYR Program by utilizing more full-time professors in the program, having staff support and prepare students for field placement year, and create more opportunities for licensure preparation.

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Social Work Faculty and Graduate Student Perceptions of a One-Year Residency Program: A Phenomenological Perspective

By

Patricia A. Gray

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by
Dr. Janice Kelly

Committee Member
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St. John Fisher College

December 2018
Dedication

At the onset of this dissertation journey I asked you my family, friends, peers, and colleagues for patience, forgiveness, understanding, and support. You gave it and as such it is with great humility and pride that I write this dedication page filled with gratitude and saying a heartfelt thank you.

My children and granddaughter – you gave me the space to do the work without complaining that I was not available. My sister, many a times you called to check in and ask how I was doing and if I needed anything. My sister in-laws, niece, and nephews, you stepped in and made sure that everything was alright and that I could get lost in my school work. My friends, your ongoing support was awesome even when I did not return a call quickly or bailed out of an event, you understood, and I am grateful. My peers and colleagues at work, thank you for your support, for asking if there was anything I needed; it meant a lot.

Dr. Seals, your support from day 1 was awesome, you directed me to SJFC and remained steadfast with me through the poster presentation, executive mentorship program, cheering me on and supporting me through the entire process, I am grateful. Dr. Kennedy, you kept me focused and asked continuously “what is this, it has no relevance remove it.” Your candor and knowledge of the work was awesome, and I appreciated every conversation about why anyone should care about my study. To the participants of my study, a heartfelt thank you for your commitment, dedication, support and honesty in sharing your voices about the OYR Program.
Dr. Janice Kelly and Dr. Byron Hargrove, my Chair and Committee Member, your guidance and support throughout this process was priceless. You took the time to share, provide insight, meet, and review, time and again, my dissertation study which was a foreign language with all the various time frames. I appreciated your patience and understanding in getting through the process. To all the faculty and staff at SJFC, your commitment to Cohort 8 never wavered and I know that I appreciate your effort, time, and knowledge shared during this past 28 months.

You remain my village of support and I salute you in giving me the strength, time, space, and support to complete this rigorous and intense program. Thank You.
Biographical Sketch

Patricia A. Gray attended City College at CUNY and earned her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology in 1986. Ms. Gray attended Columbia University School of Social Work from 1988-1990 earning a master’s degree in Social Work. As a licensed clinical social worker, Ms. Gray has over 30 years’ experience providing services in mental health, child welfare, homeless services, supportive housing, addiction services and academia. Ms. Gray’s experience and educational qualifications allows her to provide an array of social work services to include, but not limited to, clinical service, supervision, training, staff development, and supportive case management services. Ms. Gray is currently the Director of Continuing Education at the Silberman School of Social Work where she is also an adjunct lecturer in the program.
Abstract

Research shows that there is an increase in working professionals returning to social work school but are ill-prepared to give up their jobs to attend school full-time to obtain their master’s in social work degrees. The purpose of this case study analysis was to explore the perceptions of social work graduate students and faculty members within a model known as the One-Year Residency (OYR) Program on the east coast using both focus groups and interviews, respectively. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach with a purposive sample, the study focused on discovering the graduate students’ and faculty perceptions about (a) the OYR Program in general, (b) the capabilities of graduate students to take and pass the licensure exam, and (c) the graduate students’ preparedness to enter the social work profession as licensed professionals. Data collected from eight social work graduate students using three focus groups and from four faculty members using individual interviews focused on their perceptions of the OYR Program. The findings from both data sets revealed the importance of the OYR program to working professionals but also showed the void of human resources to address concerns about the program, preparation for the field placement year, and readiness to take and pass the social work licensure exam. Both students and faculty recommended the need to strengthen the OYR Program by utilizing more full-time professors in the program, having staff support and prepare students for field placement year, and create more opportunities for licensure preparation.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

The demand for qualified social workers remains critically important today as in the 1970s and 1980s. Researchers have argued since the early 1980s, that human service organizations have been raising concerns about the lack of qualified, trained, culturally competent minority workers to address the needs of their clients and provide culturally sound practice (Haffey & Starr, 1988; Starr, 1988). There is a growing need for a diverse pool of skilled, well-trained social workers who understand the needs of people of color, are familiar with cross-cultural issues, speak languages other than English, and are committed to social change (Graziano, Salmon, & Berman, 2002; Zlotnik, DePanfilis, Daining, & Lane, 2005). The U.S. Census Bureau (2012) report indicates that there is a demand for qualified social workers to work with the aging population and their families to help them to adjust to new treatments, medications, and lifestyle changes. The report further states that with more individuals seeking treatment for mental illness and substance abuse, and criminal courts utilizing an alternative to incarceration model of treatment, the need has increased for qualified social workers.

Additionally, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Administration on Aging (2015) reports projected population changes which will affect the need for qualified social workers. The U.S. population of individuals age 60 and over will increase to 420 million by the year 2060. The projection estimates an increase of 106 million from 2012, citing that the population will be considerably older, and more racially and ethnically diverse by 2060 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Additionally, the Administration on Aging (2015)
report concurred and projected that there would be 98 million older adults, which is more than twice their number in 2014. The report indicated that in 2014 people who were 65+ represented 14.5% of the population and this population will grow to 21.7% by 2040.

Simultaneously, debates on how well or adequately prepared social workers are to enter the profession are long-standing (Kane, 2004, 2006; Kane, Hamlin, & Hawkins, 2002, 2003; Miller, Grise-Owens, & Escobar-Ratliff, 2015; Miller & Robb, 1997). Kane, Hamlin et al. (2002), argued that the preparation of social work graduates to enter the profession relies on the curriculum and teachings within academic institutions, field placement practicum and supervision, with the goals of passing the state license, and securing employment. As such, social work academic institutions remain concerned whether their graduates are adequately prepared to enter the profession and meet the demands of individuals, communities, and organizations.

Social work graduates will need skills to work with the approximately one in 25 adults in the United States, representing approximately 10 million individuals, or 4.2% of the population who experience a serious mental illness that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities (National Institute of Mental Health, 2014). Of the adults residing in homeless shelters, 26% live with serious mental illness. Social workers will need specialized skills to work with these individuals. Further, an estimated 46% of homeless individuals live with severe mental illness and substance use disorders, and need support from qualified social workers (Colby & Ortman, 2015).

Research has shown that an increased number of human service professionals in social work organizations want to return to school to hone and develop their skills as they provide services to the poor, underserved, and marginalized communities (Haffey &
Starr, 1988; Starr, 1988). However, these workers faced some challenges both within the field and in pursuing educational opportunities for working professionals. Haffey and Starr (1988) stated that low wages associated with the provision of services for the neediest had been a prevalent trend in the 1970s and 1980s. The authors further stated that employees were enrolling in social work graduate school on a part-time basis and needed a curriculum which supported working students. Similarly, Kane, Hamlin et al. (2002) presented barriers that social service workers with bachelor’s level degrees experienced in performing tasks critical to the lives of clients. The workers had limited access to graduate schools of social work to attain advanced training, hone their skills, and elevate their employment and promotional opportunities.

Despite the above cited issues, social workers work with children and families to strengthen parenting skills, prevent child abuse, and identify alternative homes for children who are unable to live with their biological families (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2015). Further, the rise in behavioral issues has increased the demand for the child, family, and school social workers (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). The increase in substance use and abuse, people residing with mental health issues, increase in homelessness, and issues that are impacting children in schools (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017) magnifies the need for social workers. Further, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017) report projects a 12% increase in the employment rate for social workers. Furthermore, employment of child, family, and school social workers will grow by 6% while health, mental health, and substance abuse social workers will increase by 19% by 2024.
Although the decision by many prospective students to return to school is difficult, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2014) report projects a 20% increase in enrollment of students ages 25 and over, between the years 2010 and 2020 (NCES, 2014). When looking at graduate schools of social work enrollment; evidence from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (2016) reports that there was a total enrollment of 29,449 part-time social work students. Furthermore, from 2011 to 2015, the part-time enrollment of master’s social work students increased by 16.1%, for an average enrollment of 19,387 (CSWE, 2015).

**Problem Statement**

As social work educational programs continue to increase in size, the need for accountability to determine their effectiveness is imperative. Even more imperative is the need of the group of working professionals who account for the increase in part-time enrollment across social work educational programs, who have different educational needs than their full-time counterparts. They must also meet the required benchmarks of preparation to become licensed social work professionals.

There is a significant gap in the empirical literature about the critical issues affecting the sustainability of employed social work students in academic institutions. Newman, Dannenfelser, Clemmons, and Webster (2007) indicated that in the past, employed students often had to give up their jobs to meet the Master of Social Work (MSW) requirement of field and classroom experience to earn their degree. Returning to the past is not a viable option, and as such, social work academic institutions and organizations should adhere to the recommendations of Haffey and Starr (1988) when they shared the importance of addressing the issues relating to the competing needs of
agencies, students, and academic institutions. Only a few studies explored the possible relationships between educational program designs and program adequacy, quality, and effectiveness (Starr & Walker, 1982; Yamitani, Page, Koeske, Diaz, & MaGuire, 1986). Of the many part-time programs implemented over the past decades to provide access to social work education for working students, there is a lack of understanding of their needs. This qualitative phenomenological study focused on the One-Year Residency (OYR) Program. The study obtained the perceptions of faculty and students on a program design which allows working students the benefits of access to a public social work program in New York City.

The role of a social worker is challenging due to complex issues affecting individuals, families, organizations, and communities, as well as changes in the political environment (NASW, 2015). The complex world in which we live and work today, affects academic institutions, students, individuals, families, and communities, in dealing and coping with a myriad of issues. Social work academic institutions are aware of and are accountable for the preparedness and development of social workers to meet the demands of the workforce and the needs of individuals, families, and communities (Kane, Hamlin et al., 2002). Schools of social work have the responsibility to educate, orient, and socialize their students to the profession (Zlotnik et al., 2005).

Most social work graduates will work in public and private organizations where their roles are varied, and their skills tested (NASW, 2015). Social workers work in the three broad categories of social work practice – macro, mezzo, and micro (NASW, 2015). On the macro level, graduates will advocate and lobby for systemic changes. Mezzo practice includes working as community organizers, administrators, and the focus is on
institutional changes. Micro practice workers work directly with individuals in their environment to address issues as defined by the client system, meaning individuals, families, couples, and groups (NASW, 2015).

The demand for qualified social workers is even more critical given globalization, income inequality, increased poverty, racism, and mass incarceration (Alexander, 2011; Battalora, 2013; Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Dunbar-Ortiz, 2014; Zinn, 2015). Bogo, Regehr, Power, and Regehr (2007) argue that schools of social work are committed to ensuring that graduates of their program become professionals who can provide ethical, competent, high-quality service to the public. As such, social work schools want to ensure that they are providing access, meeting accreditation standards, and preparing their graduates to enter the profession via classroom and experiential learning.

This qualitative study fills this gap by exploring the perceptions of the faculty and students of the One-Year Residency (OYR) Program to understand the extent of program adequacy, quality, effectiveness and its impact on preparedness to enter the profession upon graduation as licensed social workers. Without adequately prepared and qualified social workers to address the needs of individuals, communities, and organizations, the future of social work looks bleak.

Social Work One Year Residency Graduate Program

The Social Work One Year Residency Graduate Program (hereafter referred to as the OYR Program), was implemented in 1971 to provide educational access to bachelor level employees interested in returning to school. Employees wanted to increase their social work knowledge and skills but could not afford to leave their jobs and attend a full-time graduate social work program at this institution (Haffey & Starr, 1988). According
to the program’s website, individuals are eligible to apply if they have completed at least 2 years of successful full-time employment in a social service agency at the time of application. Further, the website states that the current social service employer must agree to provide a field placement internship approved by the school during the student’s second year in the program. The field placement internship occurs in the place of employment of the OYR student. The field placement internship occurs during the residency year (Time frame II). Students usually complete the 60-credit program in five semesters plus two intervening summers (Silberman School of Social Work, 2017).

The OYR Program has three time frames to help students move through the program. Students in Time frame I will take up to 15 credits and attend evening classes. Students in Time frame II must simultaneously participate in a residency year where the field placement occurs at the OYR student’s place of employment and attend classes 1 day per week. Students in the Time frame III, take either the Professional Seminar or Community Organizing III in the summer term to graduate in 2 years or decide to extend their graduation date to the fall. Appendix A outlines the three time frames.

The three-time frame model meets the Education Policy Accreditation Standards (EPAS) (Petracchi, & Zastrow, 2010) for social work accreditation as it supports the 60-credit requirement for all students which includes the implicit and explicit curriculum guidelines through which the bridging of theory and practice in field education occurs. As students matriculate through the program, the expectation is that students hone their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and change their behavior and condition by becoming socialized to the profession of social work while at the educational institution. The OYR student population is more likely to be diverse as it relates to age, race, gender, and
culture and were employees at not-for-profit social service agencies, working with individuals, families, groups, and communities, but they were not social work professionals (Haffey & Starr, 1988; Salmon & Walker, 1971; Starr & Walker, 1982). Furthermore, the authors wrote, that due to the multilayered commitment of home and family, attending school full-time was out of the question as they were often parents, caregivers, and the financial providers in their households.

Theoretical Rationale

In an effort to understand the perceptions, issues, and concerns of the students and faculty of the OYR Program, this study used the theoretical framework of symbolic interaction (SI). SI focuses on how meaning and identity are co-created through interaction and how they define and interpret the situation and people around them (Tracy, 2012). The SI model assumes that peoples’ actions result from their perceptions and interpretations of the situations that confront them in their everyday lives (Aksan, Kısac, Aydın, & Demirbükken, 2009; Athens, 2010; Blumer, 1986). According to Blumer (1986), the three premises of symbolic interaction are these: (a) human beings act toward things based on the meaning that the item has for them, (b) the meaning of things is derived from the social interaction that one has with one’s fellows, and (c) these meanings are handled in and modified through an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he or she encounters.

Pickens (2005) argued that perceptions are the realities of individuals and he described a process of how our five senses assist in making decisions. His model considers the stimulus that interact with our senses, the registration of the interaction, how the information is organized based on our experiences and beliefs, and how that
information is interpreted and believed based on prior experiences, leading to continuous positive and or negative feedback. Figure 1.1 provides a depiction of Picken’s (2005) perception processing system.

![Perception Processing System](image)

**Figure 1.1.** Perception Processing System. Adapted from “Attitudes and Perceptions. Organizational Behavior in Health Care” by J. Pickens. Copyright 2005 by Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

Additionally, Bolman and Deal (2003) discussed a four framed lens in which to view organizations. These frames encompass the structural, human resources, political and symbolic components of an organization. The frame that is most pertinent to this study is the symbolic frame. The authors indicate that symbols carry powerful intellectual and emotional messages. These symbols can be represented through culture and meaning, rituals, ceremonies, stories, heroes, and myths that are important to individuals within organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2003).
This study provided the opportunity for the OYR participants to share their perceptions of the issues and concerns, use their language to make meaning of their environment, and in their own words identify the signs they see in their environment which impacts and affects their lived experiences within the OYR Program. Conducting a qualitative study to explore the perceptions of the OYR Program participants provides insight and understanding about their perceptions of the problems and their feelings of readiness to enter the social work profession.

**Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to explore faculty members’ and students’ perceptions of the Social Work OYR Graduate Program, the OYR student readiness to take and pass the state licensure exam, and the students’ readiness to enter the social work profession. Disagreement exists between the program stakeholders on whether the OYR Program is accomplishing its goals of adequately supporting and preparing the OYR students. As a result, the school administrators are struggling with a decision to sunset a program that has been in existence for almost half a century, citing issues that are detrimental to the accreditation process, tenets of social work pedagogy, and issues of program credibility. On the other hand, students as adult learners, with familial responsibilities, want to be autonomous, take their responsibilities seriously, and are concerned about their futures. These competing ideas have created a challenging environment within the program and are jeopardizing the program’s existence and continuation.

Understanding the gravity of the situation, the researcher’s goal was to help both administrators and students develop an understanding of the impact of the OYR Program
toward student preparedness during the three time frames, with the objective of obtaining licensure, and entering the social work profession as licensed individuals. The information received from this study contributes to the existing body of qualitative studies examining student perceptions of preparedness within programs similar to the OYR Program. Additionally, the researcher intends to provide the results of this study to the administrative staff, so they can use the results to implement program changes if necessary. It is through the method of communication, interaction, and practice where this researcher sought to gain a deeper understanding of the issues affecting the students and faculty in the OYR Program to answer the following research questions.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What types of perceptions do the part-time social work graduate students have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?

2. What types of perceptions do social work faculty members have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?

3. What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state Licensed Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?

**Significance of the Study**

Being informed if a program is meeting its intended purpose is critical not only to the program but the program’s constituents. Program administrators have an ethical obligation to explore whether their programs are meeting the needs of the users, and if
not, to find out why and what participants and faculty are experiencing, using empirical data. Without an examination of the OYR Program, stakeholders may make ill-informed decisions about their programs without the benefit of data. Chen (2012) argues that it is important to provide stakeholders with the actions that are required to solve a social, educational, or health problem. The purpose is not only to assess whether an intervention works or does not work, but also how and why it does. This information is essential for stakeholders to improve their existing or future programs.

As we move beyond the 21st century, more than ever the need continues for social workers to deal and cope with the issues affecting the poor, vulnerable, and disenfranchised. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015), the demographic shift speaks to the approaching needs of the elderly, the mentally ill, the opiate addicted, children and families in crises, and the social ills affecting communities. Haffey and Starr (1988) stated that access to social work education provides minority workers who have bachelor’s degrees the opportunity to upgrade their skills, thus fulfilling the community service mission of the profession by assuring an adequate representation of all population groups. Additionally, they argued, it increases the likelihood that clients will receive mental health treatment that is culturally sensitive in a bias-free environment.

Bachelor level workers within organizations continue to need access to improve and hone their skills to better serve their clients and communities. Fortune, McCarthy, and Abramson (2001) stated that agencies that serve a population of the poor call upon their employees to help individuals and families cope with serious poverty linked problems, such as drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness, violence, and teenage pregnancy, but are themselves without advanced training. The issues of managed care, globalization,
income inequality, race, and culture are issues that have a devastating impact on individuals, groups, families, and communities (Ferguson, 2009; Gelman, 2004; Jacobson & Rugeley, 2007; Kane, Hamlin et al., 2002). Access remains critical and as such, schools of social work, as the gatekeeper, have the primary responsibility for training and educating social work students by preparing them to enter the profession.

**Definitions of Terms**

*OYR* – is the one-year residency program which provides professional social work education for individuals with considerable experience in social services agencies who demonstrate a commitment to their work and profession.

*Stakeholders* – are the faculty and students who are involved or who are impacted by the OYR Program.

*Preparedness* – is the ability of program graduates to enter the profession upon completion of the coursework by taking and passing the licensure exam and practicing as a licensed social worker.

*Interpretive/Constructionism* – assumes that both reality and knowledge are constructed and reproduced through communication, interaction, and practice.

*Symbolic Interaction* – denotes that people’s actions result from their interpretations of the situations that confront them in their everyday lives.

**Chapter Summary**

Chapter 1 outlined the changing landscape of service needs for vulnerable populations and the impact in the field of social work if graduates are not prepared to meet this need. Furthermore, this chapter demonstrated the importance of the continued
need for access for bachelor level workers to graduate schools of social work through part-time programs such as the OYR model.

Chapter 2 provides an empirical review of the relevant literature on the identification of programs responding to the need of access for working professionals, focusing on studies using a qualitative approach in addressing issues in preparing social work graduate students for the profession, connecting the importance for conducting this qualitative study of the OYR Program. Chapter 3 discusses the methodological approach for conducting the study. Chapter 4 outlines the findings and analysis of the study. Chapter 5 outlines the summary and limitations of the study, as well as implications for future research, policy changes, and recommendations for the decision makers of the OYR Program.
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

Chapter 2 focuses on identifying innovative ways social work programs responded to providing access to working professionals wanting to return to schools of social work. Additionally, this section covers the characteristics of part-time students, studies that address the research questions regarding the perceptions of preparedness, the impact of stress on preparedness, employment-based field placement concerns, and dissertation topic connection.

Review of the Literature

For decades social work academic programs have responded innovatively in creating part-time program models to provide access to working professionals in attaining Masters in Social Work degrees. The creation of part-time models allowed the enrollment of working professionals as they could not afford to attend school on a full-time basis due to their multiple roles and responsibilities (Starr & Walker, 1982). In spite of the multiplicity of roles, the process of becoming a qualified social worker begins with attending graduate schools of social work (Kane, Hamlin, et al., 2002).

Innovation in Social Work Programs

The trend in the increase in part-time registration in social work academic institutions continues today and supports the ongoing need for part-time or alternative programs to meet the demands of working professionals. Studies and articles that dealt with alternative educational systems within social work schools became prevalent in the
Zosky et al. (2004) wrote that schools of social work have realized the growth in non-traditional students for the past several years and have responded to this market with flexible programs. Flexible programs included an abundance of part-time evening and weekend classes and models like the One Year Residency Program across the United States (Haffey & Starr, 1988; Marshack, 1988; Zosky et al., 2004). Additionally, condensed programs like the Aurora University in Illinois model and the breadth of online courses (Raskin et al., 2008; Zastrow & Weeden, 2007) responded to the needs of the part-time students. Without flexible programs, access to social work education for bachelor level workers would not allow them to obtain formalized training and the education necessary to understand the trends, issues, and political climate affecting policies, individuals, organizations, and communities in social work practice (Haffey & Starr, 1988).

Organizations’ plea for support in creating a professionalized workforce also contributed to the need for academic institutions to respond to the working professionals. Zlotnik (2003) discussed the use of Title IV-E funds to establish collaboration between child welfare programs and social work academic institutions to respond to the need of the workforce. In most instances, these new training partnerships between public child welfare agencies and social work education programs accessed either or both of two major federal funding sources (Title IV-B, Section 426 and Title IV-E) which are administered by the U.S. Children’s Bureau in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The allocation of financial resources supported the training of child
welfare social workers. These partnerships allowed working individuals to maintain their employment while attending school part-time.

To address the similar issue of access to social work education in Europe, Hussein, Manthorpe, and Harris (2011), described a grow your own (GYO) model developed due to a shortage of prepared and qualified social workers working with children, families, and adults in the United Kingdom. The high levels of vacancies and turnovers forced the dialogue with the government and service providers. As a result, employers identified existing staff who could undertake professional training or the employers provided funding for individuals to seek professional training. The authors shared that the GYO model facilitated the participation of non-traditional students to pursue qualification for social work school and the needed sponsorship from their employers.

Not every country responded to the needs of the working professional who desires access to graduate social work program. Canada continues to grapple with the issue of implementing a part-time program despite interest (Pelech, Barlow, Badry, & Elliot, 2009). Pelech et al. (2009) wrote that Canadian schools of social work have not widely accepted a holistic model for education that includes curriculum and field placement design for students wishing to attend school part-time. The authors shared that a workplace practicum survey, which was developed by the New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory Combined Universities Field Education Group as a joint project with the University of Calgary Faculty of Social Work and was distributed to field educators at 33 Canadian schools. The authors received 24 responses from 33 schools providing a response rate of 69%. The study explored the readiness of the institution's willingness to
implement a part-time work-study program within their schools. The responses were mixed, citing issues such as who will benefit, students missing work time, confusion and conflicts with the student, worker role, and cost. Controversy continues around this topic although there is a growing demand for the implementation of a part-time model to provide access to the working population and the increase in their skill in preparation to enter the profession.

Social work is a profession recognized nationally and internationally. Understanding the standards used in different states and countries to address concerns of the part-time employed student is critical given the issues of globalization, the needs of the poor, and the profession’s mission (Ferguson, 2009; Kapoulitsas & Corcoran 2015; NASW, 2015).

Further, a review of the international social work literature provided insight into how academic institutions responded to the issue of access to graduate schools of social work for their employed students (Moriarty, Manthorpe, Stevens, & Hussein, 2011). Diaz (2010) wrote that researchers have emphasized the importance of education to (a) increase the ability of individuals to acquire higher income, and (b) positively influence several social and economic outcomes that improve people’s well-being. The decision to return to school is directly in line with what many students have opted to do, not only for their financial futures, but to obtain the needed knowledge, skills, and abilities by attending schools of social work to address issues of individuals, organizations, and communities.
Characteristics of Students

With the impending changes to the nation’s demographics, cultural diversity practice has gained prevalence in the literature. Agencies are asking for more bilingual workers, CSWE has listed cultural diversity as one of their competencies, and academic institutions have redesigned their curriculum to include diversity education so students can be prepared to meet the changing cultural demographics (CSWE, 2015). Students will encounter more culturally diverse populations, and the expectation of being prepared is paramount. Gelman (2004) wrote that the current figures and projections from the 2000 Census underscore the significant increasing diversity of the U. S. population. In her qualitative study of 15 Latino workers working directly with Latino clients, she used grounded theory to observe and interview the worker-client interactions. Her findings indicated that the client-worker relation is interactional and considers the individuality and specific reality of the client. The work calls for flexibility and acceptance of the cultural needs of the client.

Academic institutions have the mandate to train students for culturally sensitive practice and for social workers to develop increased competence in working with diverse populations. Furman, Lewis, and Shears (2004) wrote that the literature is sparse regarding students’ preparation for culturally sensitive practice. Their qualitative study explored 314 faculty perceptions and attitudes regarding MSW students’ preparedness for culturally sensitive social work practice. The focus included the degree to which social work education is fulfilling the CSWE mandate. Overall, the results suggest that students respond positively to learning activities that provide opportunities to see and work with professional role models which give them a contextual framework for their work.
Educators can enhance student satisfaction by including both types of activity in field placements. However, the frequencies of such activities, as reported by the students, were unrelated to students' performance of social work skills.

In summary, the literature recommends cultural diversity education and training within social work. Student assignments in field education or through their work-study employment-based practicum need culturally sensitive training to work with individuals, groups, and communities. The demographic changes, working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender individuals and communities make diversity a critical issue within social work.

**Impact of Preparedness**

Debates on how well or adequately prepared social workers are to enter the profession are long-standing (Kane, 2004, 2006; Kane, Hamlin et al., 2002; Kane, Hamlin, & Hawkins, 2003; Miller et al., 2005; Miller & Robb, 1997). Kane, Houston-Vega et al. (2002) conducted a qualitative exploratory study of 98 social work students. They investigated the perceptions of liability and documentation in managed care environments. The study found that 68.7% of the students reported that they learned documentation skills in the field component of social work education, 87.0% documented according to field guidelines and 70% for reimbursement. The study further reported that only 33% of the students believed that they had the necessary documentation knowledge and skills to protect themselves from a lawsuit. Only 15.2% of the respondents believed that the classroom or the field component prepared them and 18.2% believed that social work education prepared them to avoid liability or a lawsuit. Kane (2002) asserted that there were numerous social work authors who had written extensively on liability and
ethical concerns for the profession as it interacted with managed care. However, none of these investigated social work student perception of their ability to document in a managed care environment or their concerns regarding potential liability in the managed care environment (Kane, Hamlin et al., 2002; Kane, Houston-Vega et al., 2002). The study sought to investigate students’ perceptions of knowledge and skills to document and avoid liability in managed care environments and the exploratory findings to inform educators of students’ perceived needs.

Another qualitative study conducted by Kane, Hamlin et al. (2002) focused on the perception of managing risk and personal liability. The qualitative exploratory study of 116 social work students investigated predictions of social work students’ perceived ability to manage risk and liability. The study explored students’ concerns and worry about lawsuits and their understanding of the fit between client advocacy and managed care. The findings indicated that social work students did not feel prepared to diagnose clients, and were not aware of the ethical and value conflicts, such as over-diagnosing and misdiagnosing clients and were not clear on the managed care reimbursable process.

The Kane, Houston-Vega et al. (2002) study investigated the factor structure in the development of a brief instrument which measured perceptions of 176 social work students’ preparedness to function in managed care environments. An exploratory statistical procedure to reduce data through component analysis with VARIMAX rotation design as a pre-test/post-test was used to assess the effectiveness of managed care and provide valuable information regarding the understanding of social work students who are entering these new service areas. The outcome of the study revealed that social work students need awareness about liability issues and concerns that may profoundly affect
their career and future. Altshuler and Bosch (2003), in their study, shared that employed social work students face highly complex practice situations that require knowledge of multi-level ecosystem challenges such as a client’s socioeconomic status and cultural and ethical issues, while simultaneously prioritizing client needs and strengths. In their qualitative study of 47 employed social work students, they examined the applicability of a problem-based learning model to examine preparedness to work in the school-based environment to take an active role in their learning and to determine if the students felt prepared.

When social workers use a problem-based learning model, it was helpful with identifying and solving problems around educational disabilities and cultural nuances. Thus, the studies discussed demonstrate that most social work students are less likely to be prepared with managed care documentation, managing risk and liability, understanding the fit between client advocacy and managed care, and the knowledge required within multi-level ecosystems.

**The Impact of Stress on Preparedness**

Child welfare, a major employer of OYR students, provides services to individuals, families, and children in crisis, where the exemplary social work skills are needed. Often child welfare workers work long hours, have high caseloads, and are overwhelmed with complex issues affecting families and communities (Zlotnik, 2003). While it is true that employers need prepared and productive employees, Zlotnik (2003) argued that caseworkers with high caseloads who lack professional development and preparedness to address the critical and complex issues impacting individuals and families experience burnout, creating a significant exodus of employees in child welfare
settings. This exodus speaks to the need for preparedness to the practice of the OYR student and the workforce being supportive of this group’s desire to return to school and upgrade their skills and employability. Arnolds and Boshoff (2002) agreed when they wrote that social services agencies need effective, prepared, and productive employees whose job performance is at an optimal level to achieve organizational goals. Therefore, social work employees that are not prepared and/or trained for the complex working environment are more likely to experience a level of stress that depletes their performance effectiveness.

A study conducted by Kinman and Grant (2011) explored stress and resilience in social work students in coping with organization stressors. The study examined several emotional and social competencies (i.e., emotional intelligence, reflective ability, empathy, and social competence) as predictors of resilience in 240 social work trainees. Additionally, the study explored if resilience predicted psychological distress, together with the role played by resilience in the relationship between emotional intelligence and distress. The findings showed a significant negative relationship between resilience and psychological distress. Thus, the more resilience social work trainees had, the less likely they exhibited psychological distress. Resilience fully mediated the negative association between emotional intelligence and psychological distress, highlighting the importance of inter- and intra-individual emotional competencies in promoting resilience and enhancing well-being. The authors shared that the findings might inform the curriculum to help trainees enhance resistance to workplace stress.

Stress was not only identified as an issue for students, but also within the profession, due to the varied ills of the populations served or the devastation certain
communities faced due to illnesses such as human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (Kapoulitsas & Corcoran, 2015). In responding to this issue, Kapoulitsas and Corcoran (2015), discussed the importance of having compassion for the fatigue amongst workers in social service organizations. They shared that since social workers continuously provide support to survivors of trauma, including domestic violence and child abuse victims, they understood that the work is demanding. Their study involved six social workers working with distressed clients or clients known to experience distress. Using semi-structured interviews, the authors attempted to obtain a greater understanding of the social workers’ experiences of working with distressed clients and examined how they developed personal, professional, and organizational resilience. A thematic analysis of the findings showed that workers often understood the complexities of social work practice, and as such, developed supportive networks that promoted personal well-being and self-protection. The use of qualitative research was instrumental in getting to the core of these workers’ experiences and their perceptions of organizational resilience that a quantitative study may not have uncovered.

**Employment-Based Field Placements**

The designation of field education as the pedagogy of social work signified its importance to academic institutions, students, and the profession (EPAS, 2008). Without field practicum opportunities, social work academic institutions will not meet their mandate to educate, train, and prepare the next generation of social workers to meet the needs of populations impacted and affected by the ills of society. Further, students will not have a place for practicing and learning the intricacies of working with clients, honing and developing their skills, and internalizing the concepts of the profession. The
profession’s mission of providing services to the poor and vulnerable will not have an arena to do this work. Elevating the standard and making field education just as important as classroom instruction was a step in the right direction for the profession.

Employment-based field placement is important to the OYR Program model as this type of arrangement is critical to the students (Koroloff, 1989). Researchers Hopkins, Deal, and Bloom (2005) suggested that it was time to move away from the traditional social work field placement and seek alternative methods given the need of a subset of part-time, older, employed students who needed access to social work education. While the findings indicated that the age of the students was not a significant factor, the results have implications for admission decisions, teachings, and structure of field education programs. Finally, they recommended the need for further research as the findings showed that information about field placement experiences of the older, part-time, and employment-based practicum placements was limited. Therefore, regardless of age and employment status, academic institutions must be aware of addressing concerns that may arise when students are in their field placement. Furthermore, there is a need to examine how employment-based field placements impact preparedness outcomes, which was a focus of this study.

Newman et al. (2007), in their study of 180 work-study students and 21 field instructors, explored if employment-based field placement is an effective learning experience for today’s students. The study compared student learning in employment-based internships with those of students carrying non-employment-based learning. The results showed that as the changing demographics create the need for schools of social work to reexamine their curriculum, role, and context of field internships, employment-
based field experiences appear to be a viable alternative to the traditional and non-employment-based placements. The findings suggest that internships are valuable in preparing students whether they are employment-based or non-employment based. The knowledge gained in understanding the shift toward employment based supportive placement behooves schools of social work to continue to plan for this population.

Flexibility and acceptance are key areas of learning during field placements and academic institutions. Fortune, Lee, and Cavazos (2005), in their mixed method study, obtained 188 student responses examining expectancy, value concepts, intrinsic motivation, difficulty, confidence, value, and self-efficacy. The findings showed that students were more satisfied with field education and related their social work skills were higher if they valued what they learned in the field (task value) and took pleasure in field activities (intrinsic motivation), and had a greater sense of self-efficacy. Further, the findings of motivation suggest that achievement motivation is an important factor in students' success in field practicum, at least from their perspectives. Students who valued what they were learning, took pleasure in what they were doing, and had greater self-efficacy about accomplishing it successfully, were more satisfied with their field education and reported greater skill at social work tasks (Fortune et al., 2005). Their achievement motivation and self-ratings were not, however, associated with field instructor evaluations of their skills.

Supervision with well-trained field instructors who provide guidance, support and reflective supervision in addressing issues of perception and its impact on clients is part of the process within field education. Two studies completed 12 years apart supported the important role of the field instructors in preparing students and making the placement
experience successful. The study conducted by Fortune et al. (2001) explored the activities associated with the MSW student performance in the field, the perception of quality, and satisfaction with the field. The qualitative study of 64 students used observation, participatory and conceptual linkage learning activities in their placement of first- and second-year students. Brodie and Williams (2013) conducted an ethnographic mixed method study of eight field instructors with their students and engaged in a 65-day audio recording of supervision sessions and the interviews of students. The high level of congruence between students and field instructors in their perspectives on the supervisory relationships confirmed the findings of other studies concerning effective supervision and provided vivid evidence of field instructor/student activity that was conducive to student learning. Constructive feedback on performance is critical to the student learning and overall social work preparedness.

Guided by the principle that social work values and advocates for vulnerable populations, the Bogo et al. (2007) study reported on an analysis of qualitative data accrued across four research studies of 100 field instructors in addressing their experiences in evaluating students and providing corrective feedback when necessary. Findings suggested that while tools for field evaluation are increasingly attempting to provide standardized, objective, and impartial measures of performance, these evaluations nevertheless occur within a professional and relational context that may undermine their value.

In addition to understanding the field instructor’s experience with evaluating students, two studies focused on the understudied area of macro-oriented practice (administrative or community) for social work students. Some tasks relevant for macro-
practice students in the field are learning about budgets, program development, supervision, and community organizing and advocacy. Kindle’s (2010) qualitative study of 1,506 social work students explored their perceptions of financial literacy and its relevance to practice. The outcome demonstrated a moderate awareness of the relevance of financial literacy in 11 of the 15 problem issues commonly encountered in practice, including a moderate receptivity to financial education. Financial and budgetary concerns within organizations can become stressful for administrators, staff, students, and clients as they think about budget cuts, layoffs, downsizing, or program closure.

The viability of appropriate field placements is disconcerting as most agencies are experiencing a lack of qualified field instructors to provide supervision for students (Jarman-Rohde, McFall, Kolar, & Strom 1997; Reisch & Jarman-Rohde, 2000). The era of managed care has impacted an organization’s ability to continue being a viable resource for field placements. Most organizations, because of the inability to bill for the work provided by their students, are withdrawing their support, leaving a void for placements of social work schools. Bocage, Homonoff, and Riley (1995) shared that since student training is not revenue producing and field instructors often receive no workload credit for supervision, there is no incentive to prepare students for the profession. Additionally, Jarman-Rohde et al. (1997) reported on the limited access in locating adequate field placements due to cuts in government funding, privatization, and cost containment in human services.

There is a significant gap in the empirical literature about the critical issues affecting the sustainability of employed student field placements. Newman et al. (2007) indicated that in the past, employed students often had to give up their jobs to meet the
MSW requirement of field and classroom work in order to earn an MSW. Returning to the past is not a viable option, and as such, social work academic institutions and organizations should adhere to the recommendations of Haffey and Starr (1988) when they shared the importance of addressing the issues relating to field work and the competing needs of agencies, students, and academic institutions.

**Dissertation Topic Connection**

The issues affecting the One-Year Residency (OYR) program has far-reaching implications on many levels at the school of social work. OYR students work in every social work setting. Their careers include working in employee assistance programs, with unions, hospices, hospitals, mental health and substance abuse centers, senior centers, settlement houses, day treatment programs, schools, as well as in public and private agencies (NASW, 2015). The OYR students are returning to school as they realize the importance of education, but for most, it is a pathway for promotion, growth, development, and job security within their organizations (Kane, Hamlin et al., 2002).

Although the initial program goals were successful (collaborate with organizations to improve the skills of the workforce by providing access to employed students) they conflict with the perceptions of stakeholders and are creating significant challenges within this mature OYR Program model. The school administrators are struggling with a decision to sunset a program that has been in existence for almost half a century, citing issues such as students who want to reduce the length of the program structure, poor field placement, lack of collaborative support in the residency year, and the low pass rate on the social work licensure exam. The students, on the other hand, as adult learners with familial responsibilities, of which most are the head of households,
need access and ongoing support. They use the opportunities presented in the winter to take additional courses to graduate within 2 years. However, they need support with field placement issues, and most will lose their jobs if they do not become licensed social workers. These competing ideas have created havoc within the school.

The completion of a comparative study of the part-time and full-time degree students in 1981 indicated no difference in learning outcomes of the students (Starr & Walker, 1982). Since that time, no one has been able to answer affirmatively if any additional studies were ever conducted on the OYR Program to determine problems, create solutions to the problems, and decide on a course of action as the program matured. The OYR Program is almost 50 years old, but it is not too late to conduct a qualitative study to hear the lived experiences of the OYR Program participants and faculty members, to address the issues outlined by the stakeholders. It is important to hear the lived experiences of the faculty and students as to their perceptions about the program’s success or failure. Solutions to fixing the identified problems are critical. Utilizing the core concepts of qualitative study (self-reflexivity, context, and thick descriptions) allowed for clarification and deliberation about problems and risks to the OYR Program stakeholders, outlining how things could be done differently while providing the full knowledge that there is not an ultimate answer (Tracy, 2012).

Chapter Summary

The review of the literature demonstrated the relevance of the topic and told the story of the primary concepts and theories that frame the study and how these ideas have evolved (Galvan & Galvan, 2017; Tracy, 2012). Reviewing the body of literature concerning the research topic provided relevance and supported the need for answering
the research questions. This study contributes to the body of knowledge in addressing the issues of part-time social work students in academic institutions and their perceptions of preparedness to enter the profession. Bolman and Deal (2003) asserted that managers and leaders often bring too few ideas and too many habitual responses to organizational problems and challenges. The authors shared that,

Managers rely on a limited cognitive perspective to make sense of the world and remain blind to other options. They delude themselves into thinking theirs is “the only way” to handle a problem. Such thinking hinders managerial effectiveness and abilities to understand and respond to the complexities of life in today’s turbulent world. (Bolman & Deal, 2003, p. 1)

Hearing the voices and lived experiences of the OYR students provides data-driven information about the issues and concerns within the program to make appropriate decisions. Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology used to guide the qualitative phenomenological research study. Topics outlined includes the research context, design, and the rationale for the design, participant information, data collection, and analysis methods.
Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Introduction

Over the past several decades higher education has responded innovatively to the needs of working professionals as they return to school at a rapid rate (Zosky et al., 2004). Social work academic institutions also responded to the needs of working professionals by creating part-time programs such as the One Year or Reduced Residency programs at various schools of social work in the New York City area (Starr & Walker, 1982). Additionally, traditional part-time models at both public and private social work institutions across the United States and the compressed innovative model such as in Aurora University, flourished as a result of responding to the needs of the working professional (Zastro & Weeden, 2007).

More recently, the demand for accountability has increased as program adequacy, quality, effectiveness, and participant preparedness has escalated. Although accountability is not a new phenomenon in academic institutions, the need for qualified and prepared social workers is critical. Ferguson (2009) reported that with the increases in inequality, poverty, homelessness, prison industries, and slashes to services, these issues present challenges to preparing new graduates to enter the profession and work in organizations serving the most vulnerable and underserved clients. Social work academic institutions are the places which provide learning opportunities to change individual attitudes and prepare them for a more challenging wave that real life brings (Gaddi, 2016). As such, the purpose of this study was to explore the social work faculty’ and
graduate students’ perceptions of a 1-year residency program using a phenomenological perspective. The goal was to understand their perspectives given the critical issues and concerns raised by stakeholders in the academy, that students are circumventing the curriculum, not having an appropriate field placement during the residency year, and not taking or passing the licensure exam. The OYR Program has operated within an academic, social work institution in New York City for decades.

Creswell (2014) shared that qualitative research is an approach to exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process, he stated, involves questions, procedures, and collecting data in the participants’ settings. He further stated that “those who engage in qualitative inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, focuses on individual meaning and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation” (p.4). When choosing a qualitative research approach, the researcher makes five philosophical assumptions. Philosophical assumptions taken by the researcher, provides direction for the study. This includes the researcher’s view (ontology), how the researcher knows reality (epistemology), the value stance taken by the inquirer (axiology), and the procedures used in the study (methodology). Table 3.1 provides the assumptions, the questions they address, their characteristics, and the implication for this study.
Table 3.1
Philosophical Assumptions and Implications for this Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumption</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Implications for This Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontological</td>
<td>What is the nature of reality?</td>
<td>Reality is subjective and multiple as seen by participants in the study</td>
<td>Quotes and themes depicted the words of the students and faculty interviewed and different perspective prevailed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistemological</td>
<td>What is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched?</td>
<td>Researcher attempts to lessen distance between himself or herself and that being researched</td>
<td>Researcher interviewed and observed students and faculty in the academic institution, was the instrument for data collection and had to be mindful of her positionality as a social worker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axiological</td>
<td>What is the role of values?</td>
<td>Researcher acknowledges that research is value-laden and that biases are present</td>
<td>Researcher discussed values that shape narrative and included interpretation with that of the students and faculty in the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetorical</td>
<td>What is the language used?</td>
<td>The researcher writes in APA style and uses terms and a narrative unique to the qualitative approach which is personal.</td>
<td>The researcher used the language of qualitative research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>What is the research process?</td>
<td>Relies on views of the participants within context of the study, uses inductive logic and moves from particulars to abstractions</td>
<td>Researcher described the context of the study, immersed self in the data, reviewed data established codes and highlight the themes</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The phenomenological approach focuses on understanding the essence of the experience and those who shared the same experience or lived the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Further, this approach provided the opportunity for the students and faculty to talk about the OYR Program in their own words, free of the constraints imposed by fixed-response questions that quantitative studies use (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2012). Most importantly though, Moustakas, (1994) posited that “phenomenology uses bracketing where the researcher excludes his or her knowledge and experiences related to the topic in order to see things as they appear, free from preconceptions and prejudgements” (p. 90). Similar to Moustakas, Lin (2013) described three processes for conducting a phenomenological analysis. He described the process known as *epoche* similar to bracketing, in that it allows the temporary suspension of the researcher’s existing personal biases, beliefs, preconceptions, and assumptions about the phenomenon in order to get to the pure and unencumbered vision of what it essentially is (Lin, 2013). The second process is *eidetic reduction*, meaning the process of getting to the core, going beyond, behind, or underneath conventional patterns of thoughts and actions in order to expose the meaning structure. Finally, *imaginative variation* is the procedure used to reveal possible meaning through utilizing imagination, varying the frames of reference, employing polarities and reversals, and approaching the phenomenon from divergent perspectives, different positions, role, or functions. Utilizing a quantitative approach would not provide the rich data needed to support the understanding of the experiences of the OYR stakeholders. Creswell (2014) shared that quantitative studies focus on deductive reasoning. There is one reality, data collection
occurs by measuring things, it is analyzed using numerical statistical inferences, and data
is reported through statistical analyses.

Tracy (2012) outlined an eight-point conceptualization for obtaining quality in
qualitative research which serves as a pedagogical tool, promotes dialogue among
researchers from various paradigms, and encourages the viability and credibility of
qualitative research with a variety of audiences (see Appendix B). Utilizing Tracy’s
(2012) eight-point conceptualization plan demonstrates the criteria for this qualitative
study. The author suggested that a study is worthy if it is relevant, timely, significant,
and interesting. Based on the issues outlined above, the demand for accountability, the
ongoing need for part-time programs, and the critical need for prepared social workers
deem the topic as worthy. Rich rigor refers to the care and effort taken to ensure the
appropriateness of the research. The use of the phenomenological approach in hearing the
voices and lived experiences of the OYR Program participants and faculty about the
issues and concerns, what worked, has not worked and recommendations for
improvement demonstrates that this researcher was committed to the time, effort, and
thoughtfulness needed for the study.

Sincerity means that good qualitative research is genuine and vulnerable.
Genuineness and vulnerability are indicative of self-reflexivity, values, biases, and the
inclination of the researcher. As a professional social worker, one who had to work while
attending social work school, and, as an employee and adjunct within the program, being
cognizant, sincere, and upfront with not only the participants, but the administrators
within the program, were critical. Establishing credibility is an important trait in research
and is demonstrated by dependability, trustworthiness, and expressing a reality that is plausible or seems true.

As such using thick description, triangulation, hearing the numerous voices, and engaging in member reflections with the participants, the study attains credibility. *Resonance* is the voices of the participants that meaningfully reverberate and impact an audience. Understanding the issues affecting the participants of the OYR Program and making thoughts visible from their perspective, generates practical insight and deepens understanding and is a *significant contribution* from the study. As a social worker, this researcher addressed accountability by adhering to the tenets of ethical behavior of the profession and as such, checked in with my feelings and sought supervision along the research process. Additional steps, such as following the rules and procedures, understanding the context of applying *ethics*, and applying a work ethic, are crucial in conducting a qualitative study.

Furthermore, implementing the Institutional Review Board philosophy of not harming, avoiding deception, obtaining informed consent, and ensuring privacy and confidentiality were vital. By ensuring that the study achieves its stated purpose, using appropriate paradigms, connecting the reviewed literature with the methods and findings, then meaningful coherence occurs.

The purpose of this study was to explore faculty members’ and students’ in-depth stories and lived experiences within the Social Work OYR Graduate Program and their perceptions of OYR student-readiness to pass the state licensure exam and enter the social work profession. The following research questions guided this study:
1. What types of perceptions do the part-time social work graduate students have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?

2. What types of perceptions do social work faculty members have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?

3. What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state License Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?

Maxwell (2012) posits that qualitative design is a do it yourself process that involves tacking back and forth between the different components of the design, assessing their implications for one another, and the interconnection and interaction among the different components. Figure 3.1 indicates Maxwell’s (2012) interactive design for qualitative research.

![Figure 3.1. Maxwell An Interactive Design](image)

Figure 3.1. Maxwell An Interactive Design. Adapted from “Qualitative Research Design: An interactive Approach” by J. Maxwell, 2012. Copyright 2012 Sage Publications.

The interactive design suggested by Maxwell (2012) provides a five-component model to support and understand the importance and interconnectedness of each stage of
the qualitative study. Ensuring that there are clear goals, that the conceptual framework underlies the issues being studied, the method speaks to the type of study and validity ensures trustworthiness (Maxwell, 2012). See Appendix C.

**Research Context**

The three time frames modules outlined (Appendix A) provide an overview of the courses specific to the OYR students. The time frames allow each OYR student to navigate the curriculum and understand the process needed for program completion. Students in *Time Frame I* take up to 15 credits and attend evening classes. Students in *Time Frame II* must simultaneously participate in a residency year known as field placement which occurs at the OYR student’s place of employment and attend classes 1 day per week. Students in *Time Frame III*, take either the Professional Seminar or Community Organizing III in the summer term to graduate in 2½ years or decide to extend their graduation date to the fall.

Both faculty and students provided rich and in-depth information about their competence, experience, and assisted in reaching saturation in the study using both interviews and focus groups. The face-to-face interviews provided demographic information about the faculty, and they answered seven open-ended questions to explore their perceptions and understanding of their lived experiences in the OYR Program (Creswell, 2014). Likewise, the focus group interviews with the students provided demographic information. They answered 10 open-ended questions to explore the perceptions and understanding of their lived experiences about the OYR Program (Creswell, 2014). The focus groups included the students while the faculty participated
in individual interviews enabling both groups to have the opportunity to freely express their thoughts without feeling intimidated, fearful, or concerned.

Because of their involvement in the OYR Program, both faculty and students met the selection criteria to participate in the research study. The researcher conducted three student focus group interviews examining their perceptions around the OYR Program, field placement agreement, their perceptions around their preparedness to take the licensure exam, and their perceptions of their preparedness to enter the profession. The student interviews were approximately 1 hour each which allowed time for all participants to contribute to the process. Further, the student focus group interviews included approximately eight students enrolled in the OYR Program during the 2016 and 2017 academic year. Additionally, there were four in-depth face-to-face interviews with the faculty examining their perceptions about the OYR Program, licensure, and student preparedness. Faculty interviews were about 1 hour each to ensure saturation. The four in-depth face-to-face interviews with the faculty occurred with faculty employed during the 2016 and 2017 academic year.

The phenomenological qualitative study was in line with Creswell’s (2014) recommendations that the sample size of eight to 10 participants is adequate. Further Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006) suggested that sample size should be large enough to generate rich descriptives. In addition to ensuring the appropriate sample size, qualitative studies emphasize the importance of rigor by attaining saturation, which will be achieved based upon the length of the interviews.
Positionality

Positionalities are shaped by multiple identities through which we experience the world and through which we acquire or deny certain privileges (Finn, 2016). As such, the role of the researcher is an important aspect in conducting the study as it requires the researcher to be cognizant of biases and work to avoid any negative effects this may have on the study (Patton 2015). The qualitative researcher often is deeply engaged in the process and must be mindful of her role. Coghlan and Brannick (2014) understood the notion of positionality when they argued that while researchers have many roles, being an insider researcher is acceptable and refers to this as being native to the setting and as such, have insights from the lived experience. The authors lament that rather than considered a benefit, insiders are perceived to be prone to charges of being too close, and thereby, not attaining the distance and objectivity deemed necessary for valid research. They went on to say, “We are all insiders of many systems—our families, communities, and organizations—and the knowledge we have of these systems is rich and complex” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014, p.60). Table 3.2 outlines the research paradigms taken from Coghlan and Brannick (2014) in understanding the philosophical foundations of conducting studies as an insider.

As the researcher conducting the interviews, this researcher is mindful of her positionality as a social worker, an employee, and adjunct within the setting for the study. As a former employed student, this researcher worked and attended graduate school full-time, as there was no alternative program in the academic institution this researcher attended at the time. Further as an adjunct in the OYR Program and an administrator in the academic institution, being mindful of the challenges of the insider researcher role is
critical. Creswell and Poth (2016) cautions researchers to be mindful of ethical issues and focus on bracketing as a means of ensuring the focus in the interview is on the participants and not the researcher. To mitigate the above, the researcher sought feedback from her chair and committee to be mindful of ethical issues throughout the study.

Table 3.2

*Research Paradigms Source*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Philosophical Foundations</th>
<th>Positivism</th>
<th>Hermeneutic and Postmodernism</th>
<th>Critical Realism and Action Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontology</td>
<td>Objectivist</td>
<td>Subjectivist</td>
<td>Objectivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistemology</td>
<td>Objectivist</td>
<td>Subjectivist</td>
<td>Subjectivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Generalizability</td>
<td>Particular</td>
<td>Particular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexivity</td>
<td>Methodological</td>
<td>Hyper</td>
<td>Epistemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Researcher</td>
<td>Distance from data</td>
<td>Close to data</td>
<td>Close to data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adapted from “*Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization*” by D. Coghlan and T. Brannick, 2014. Copyright 2014 by Sage Publications.

**Research Participants**

The study used a purposive sample as the OYR students and faculty fit the parameters of the projects’ research questions, goals, and purposes (Tracy 2012). When using a purposive sample, the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most information is attainable (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). As such, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) proposed the identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. Further, Creswell and Creswell (2017) remind researchers that in addition to
participants’ knowledge, their availability, and willingness to participate, the ability to communicate their experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner are important.

The recruitment procedures used for both students and faculty were as follows. First, approval of St. John Fisher College and the study’s Institutional Review Boards (IRB) allowed the researcher to engage both students and faculty to conduct the study. After approvals were obtained, students and faculty were recruited.

**Students.** Step 1-Request: The researcher obtained from the registrar the list of all the OYR students enrolled in the academic institution during academic years 2016 and 2017. The list included identifying information such as names, e-mail addresses, program code, and specific identification number. The researcher created an Excel spreadsheet and deleted all identification information, codes, and created pseudonyms to protect the identity of each participant.

Step 2-Response: 326 students received an e-mail with an introduction letter (Appendix D) describing the study and requesting their participation in the study. Once the students agreed to participate, they were asked to sign the agreement letter (Appendix E) and complete a demographic pre-screening questionnaire approved by the Institutional Review Board (see Appendix F, Student Demographics Questions).

Step 3-Selection: The first 20 students who responded were selected and sent the introductory letters as they met the following criterion: (a) having the designation of OYR on one’s program code, (b) attended the program between the years 2016 and 2017.

Step 4-Contact: The students who responded to the e-mail and answered the demographic pre-screening questionnaire received the informed consent letter which
described the study, its purpose, and the study’s voluntary nature; including that participants have the right to refuse participation without fear of reprisal, ostracism, or undue influence (see Appendix G, Informed Consent).

Step 5-Interview: Participants were asked to confirm their attendance in focus groups lasting approximately 1 hour each. The researcher requested dates and times from the students and requested the use of one of the many conference rooms within the school to accommodate as best as possible the student's schedules. The researcher digitally recorded the interviews to ensure reliability and support for coding and data analysis.

Step 6-Disposition: Erasing and creating pseudonyms assisted in maintaining the confidentiality of all students participating in the study to ensure the authenticity of the participant's voice. Student’s information will be kept in a password protected file for 4 years in a place to which only the researcher has access, and then will be deleted permanently.

**Faculty.** Step 1-Request: The researcher obtained from the dean's office a copy of the names of faculty and adjuncts who taught OYR students enrolled in the academic institution during academic years 2016 and 2017. The researcher created an Excel spreadsheet and deleted all identification information and created pseudonyms to protect the identity of each faculty.

Step 2-Response: Each faculty received an introduction letter (Appendix H faculty introductory letter) describing the study and requesting their participation in the study. The faculty who agreed to participate in the study received the informed consent letter of participation which was signed and returned (Appendix I).
Step 3-Selection: The four faculty who responded and signed the introductory letter participated in the study. The faculty members met the following criterion: (a) being a full-time or an adjunct professor teaching within the school of social work; and (b) have taught the students in either core classes, methods (clinical, organizational management and leadership or community organizing and program development) or as electives.

Step 4-Contact: The faculty members confirmed their interest and before signing the informed consent, reviewed the information describing the study, its purpose, and the study’s voluntary nature; including that participants have the right to refuse participation without fear of reprisal, ostracism, or undue influence (see Appendix I, faculty informed consent).

Step 5-Interview: Faculty agreed to the face-to-face interview lasting approximately 1 hour each in their offices. The questions were open-ended, and the goal was to answer the three research questions and the six interview questions. The researcher digitally recorded the interviews for data reliability, coding, and analysis.

Step 6-Disposition: The researcher erased faculty identification information to maintain the confidentiality and created pseudonyms to ensure the authenticity of the participant's voice. Faculty’s information will be kept in a password protected file for 4 years in a place to which only the researcher has access and then will be deleted permanently.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

Steeped in the inductive or emic perspective qualitative study is a method of data collection whose primary building block is the use of words and not numbers (Creswell,
2014). It is used in real life context to uncover certain phenomenon, it lends itself to multiple approaches, it provides a comprehensive research strategy, and the precise design of the research is emergent (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, 2011; Tracy, 2012). Instruments used to collect data in qualitative studies includes observing, interviewing, documenting, and recording (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

After obtaining IRB approvals the researcher used a 14-item questionnaire to collect student demographic data, and conducted three focus group interviews with eight students, four individual interviews with faculty, and writing and recording field notes to document responses in both the focus group and face-to-face interviews (Creswell, 2014; Krueger & Casey, 2015). Student focus group I (SFG-I) had two students, SFG-II had three students, and SFG-III had three students. The interviews provided opportunities for the researcher to address issues as they arose as one may not know what participants may say during interviews (Tracy, 2012). Recording and documenting the field notes assisted with validation of the study. The below section outlines the data collection procedure for the students and faculty in the study:

**Students.** The student demographic questionnaire allowed the researcher to substantiate that the participants met the research criteria of enrolling in the school of social work as an OYR student between 2016 and 2017 academic years, that they were appropriate for the study, having the expert knowledge to inform the research problem and recommend solutions (Creswell, 2014). The student demographic questionnaire was a 14- item mixed with open-ended and multiple-choice questions designed to assess the demographic characteristics of the part-time graduate students. Students were asked to provide information about the year they were accepted within the program; their current
time frame, method, gender, age, race, marital status, the signed Agency Executive OYR agreement, current employment status, changes in employment status since acceptance, highest level of education, household income, employment setting, and job title (see Appendix F Student Demographic Questions). The students received the questions in a Word document. The results were uploaded to Excel to create charts of the outcomes.

The researcher developed eight semi-structured interview questions that connect to the two research questions relating to the perception, experience, and preparedness of the OYR students to enter the social work profession. The interview protocol allowed the researcher to probe and obtain detailed descriptions and explanations of their perceptions, experiences, relationships, and to ascertain the issues within the program (Creswell, 2014; Seidman, 2013). The below interview questions answered research questions 1 and 3. RQ1 stated: What types of perceptions do the part-time social work graduate students have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program? Interview questions designed to answer RQ1 were:

1. What were the reasons as to why you selected the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program for part-time professionals here at this academic institution?
2. What were the reasons as to why you selected the part-time program as opposed to the full-time social work program?
3. How would you describe your overall experiences since enrolling in the OYR Program?
4. What have been your observations about the faculty and staff assistance provided within the OYR Program?
5. How has the OYR Program prepared you for the residency year?

6. What are some of the challenges or concerns as you prepare for the residency year?

RQ3 asked: What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state License Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?

Interview questions designed to answer RQ3:

1. How has the OYR Program prepared you to take the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?

2. How would you describe your expectations regarding your ability to pass the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?

**Faculty interview protocol.** The researcher developed nine semi-structured interview questions for the faculty that connected to the research questions relating to their perception, experience, and preparedness of the OYR students to enter the social work profession. The interview protocol allowed the researcher to probe and obtain detailed descriptions and explanations of their experiences, relationships, and to ascertain their perception of the issues within the program (Creswell, 2014; Seidman, 2013). The interview questions answered research question 2 and 3. RQ2 stated: What types of perceptions do social work faculty members have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program? Interview questions designed to answer RQ2 were:

1. What were the reasons as to why you decided to teach here in this Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program for part-time professionals at this academic institution?
2. In your opinion, how does the OYR curriculum design and instruction prepare and develop future social workers?

3. How would you describe your overall experiences as a faculty member in the OYR Program?

4. What have been your overall observations about the part-time students enrolled in the OYR Program at this institution?

5. From your experience, how has the OYR Program prepared students for their residency year?

6. What are some of the challenges within the OYR Program particularly as the students prepare for their residency year?

RQ3 asked: What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state License Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?

Interview questions designed to answer RQ3:

1. How has the OYR Program prepared the students to take the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?

2. How would you describe your expectations regarding the students’ ability to pass the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?

3. To your knowledge, how successful have the OYR Program graduates regarding entering and working within the social work field?

Appendix J provides a comprehensive view of the focus groups and face-to-face interview questions linked to the three research questions for the students and faculty.
**Expert panel.** Two experts in the field of social work research Dr. Kennedy and Dr. Otuyelu, validated the interview questions for both the students and faculty to ensure rigor. Both possess extensive research skills, are faculty within social work academic institutions, familiar with instrument design and development and experts in the social welfare community. The panel provided feedback on the proposed interview questions. The researcher made the changes to the proposed interview questions recommended by the researcher’s dissertation chair and committee member.

**Field notes protocol.** Despite the recording of the interviews of both faculty members and students, the researcher also took field notes to assist in the ongoing review, reflection, and confirmation during the data collection, coding, and analysis the study. Tracy (2012) shared that field notes assist with efficiency, reliability and durability, organization, and making sense of and learning from the data.

**Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis**

Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) state that one of the most important steps in the qualitative research process is data analysis as it is the technique used to understand a phenomenon fully. One data analysis strategy is data triangulation which uses different sources or people to compare and give meaning to the data. Wilson (2014) refers to this process as triangulation, meaning to use more than one approach when researching to obtain richer, fuller, data and/or to help confirm the results of the research. The author described Flick’s (2004) four types of triangulation to include *data triangulation*—as using different sources of data at different times and places with different people. *Investigation triangulation* means using people or at least more than one in the data gathering and data analysis process. *Theory triangulation* means approaching the data with multiple theories.
or perspectives in mind. *Methodological triangulation* means using more than one method to gather data. Other researchers such as Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007, 2008), Thurmond (2001), Flick (2004) and Denzin and Lincoln (1994), all recognize triangulation as a strategy leading to deeper understanding of the issue under investigation and therefore a step in the road to greater knowledge.

In addition to using triangulation as a strategy in data analysis, Creswell and Miller (2000) argued the importance of determining validity in qualitative inquiry. The authors shared that the choice of validity procedures governs the lens the researcher chooses and the paradigm assumptions. The constructivist paradigm perspective believes that there are multiple realities and espouses the importance of trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, authenticity, fairness, leads to improved understanding in the construction of others, and stimulates and empowers action (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Validity is defined as how accurately the account represents participants realities of the social phenomena and is credible to them (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The lens of the researcher and the constructivist or interpretive positions were significant in establishing credibility and validity. Table 3.3 guided the process of data analysis to establish credibility and validity.
Table 3.3

Validity Procedures within Qualitative Lens and Paradigm Assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigm assumption/Lens</th>
<th>Post-positivist or Systematic paradigm</th>
<th>Constructionist Paradigm</th>
<th>Critical Paradigm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The lens of the Researcher</td>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>Disconfirming evidence</td>
<td>Researcher reflexivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lens of the Study Participants</td>
<td>Member checking</td>
<td>Prolonged engagement in the field</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lens of People External to the Study (Reviewers, Readers)</td>
<td>The audit trail</td>
<td>Thick, rich description</td>
<td>Peer debriefing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Adapted from “Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry” by J. Creswell and D. Miller, 2000, Copyright by Theory into Practice.

The researcher recorded both sets of interviews digitally and sent the device to an independent transcriber. Before sending out the digitally recorded information for transcription, the researcher removed all identifying information. The outline below is the procedure used for data analysis.

Step 1 – The lens of the researcher-immersion – The researcher read, reviewed, examined and made notes in the data from her handwritten reports, listened to the digital recordings for both focus groups and individual interviews. Coding included the classification and interpretation of what was said to create meaning through the establishment of codes (Charmaz, 2011; Creswell, 2014; Saldaña, 2015). Upon reviewing the completed written transcriptions repeatedly (Patton, 1980), the use of an Excel spreadsheet allowed for the repeated processes of coding and analyzing the data
using chunks of the data (Saldaña, 2015) by generating single coded words, then full paragraphs, and eventually entire pages of text (Miles & Huberman 1999; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). The researcher also used the software Dedoose, a database which provides support to code the data, supports data analysis of both the interviews and focus groups, and provided at a glance opportunity to depict frequency of code use, co-occurrence of words, and patterns located within the data. The process of analyzing the data included the use of codes for classification and interpretation of what was said, leading to the creation of meaning through extracting themes, patterns, categories, and case examples (Patton, 2015).

Step 2 – disconfirming/triangulation – The researcher gleaned the data searching for answers to the research questions as well as evidence of the OYR students circumventing the curriculum, not having supervision in the residency rear (Time frame II), and not taking or passing the Licensed Masters Social Work Exam (LMSW). The purpose of looking for disconfirming data provided support for obtaining credibility as each person’s reality is “multiple and complex” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127). Further, utilizing the four types of triangulation described by Denzin and Lincoln (1994) (across data, theories, methods, and from different investigators), this researcher sorted through the data for themes and categories from both the focus groups and the individual interviews. This process ensured fair representation of the participants by capturing the individual's point of view, examining the constraints of everyday life, and securing rich descriptions (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Tracy, 2012).

Step 3 – Prolonged engagement in the field establishes validity for researchers by focusing on building a tight and holistic case (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Given the
positionality of the researcher as a social worker and an employee within the institution, during the interviews the ability to probe deeply when the situation lacked clarity or encouraged deeper thinking and understanding of the issues presented, created opportunities for participants to talk, and correct or support each other, which contributed to the validity of the discussions. Although none of the participants were in my class, they reported that they heard good things about this researcher and that they trusted the process, were comfortable in speaking their truths, and felt that they could disclose information. Being an insider, working in the institution, and using the constructivist process supported what Creswell and Miller (2000) refer to as gaining a better understanding of the participant’s views.

Step 4 – Thick, rich descriptions – Combining the old-fashioned way of color notepads, pencils, stickies, cut and paste with the use of Dedoose, a database to review, organize, and analyze the data, afforded this researcher the opportunity to generate themes and patterns. The researcher identified the themes and contextualized the findings by using quotes to generate stories that give voice to the students and faculty (Gelo, Braakmann, & Benetka, 2008). Using direct quotes from the individuals allowed the researcher to create statements, that when others are reading the accounts of the students or faculty, one would feel as if they could experience being an OYR student or a faculty within the program (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Rereading the logs and the transcriptions repeatedly demonstrated rigor of the research process to understand the perceptions, thoughts and feelings relating to the OYR Program. The constructivist’s perspective supports the use of this procedure to contextualize the participants’ reports by allowing the researcher to provide details about how the OYR students and faculty perceived the
program, using and being a part of the program, the program’s function, and the environment in which the program operates. Shenton (2004) argued that thick, rich descriptions of the phenomenon under scrutiny are an important provision for promoting credibility as it helps to convey the actual situations under investigation and the contexts that surround them. To understand the thick, rich, descriptions, the application of the schema of thematic analysis tool developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) supported and provided understanding the phases and description of the process of obtaining a rich and detailed yet complex, account of the data. The authors argued that researchers must familiarize themselves with their data by transcribing, reading, jotting down notes, generate initial codes, search, and review, define, and name themes, and produce a report. Table 3.4 describes the six phases of the process leading to the use of thematic analysis.

Table 3.4

**Phase and Description of the Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description of the Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Familiarizing with data</td>
<td>Transcribing, reading, rereading the data, noting initial ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Generating initial codes</td>
<td>Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Searching for themes</td>
<td>Gathering data and collating codes into potential themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reviewing themes</td>
<td>Checking the themes about the coded extracts and the entire data set, generating a thematic map of the analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Defining and naming themes</td>
<td>Ongoing analysis to refine each theme and generate a clear definition and names for each theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Producing the report</td>
<td>Selection of vivid, compelling text extracts relating to the analysis of the research and literature, producing a scholarly report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adapted from *Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology* by V. Braun and V. Clarke, 2006, p 87. Copyright 2006 by Qualitative Research in Psychology.
Step 5 – Report of findings – Qualitative studies provide an avenue for fair representation of others and provide inclusivity by capturing the individual's point of view, examining the constraints of everyday life and securing rich descriptions (Creswell, 2014). The researcher’s report of the findings includes a narrative format on the participants’ perceptions and their understanding of what the experiences meant to them (Erickson, 2011; Moustakas, 1994). Miles et al. (2014) describe three concurrent flow of activities in data analysis to include (a) data condensation, (b) data display, and (c) conclusion drawing/verification. The authors argued the importance of interweaving all three components before, during, and after data collection to form an interactive cycle. The interactive cycle, important to the conclusion drawing/verification outlined, is of significance to the report findings as it allows for the use of charts, graphs, and tables to support the researcher’s systematic outline of the findings. The components of data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1999), an interactive model, depicts the cyclical process of all three components as shown in Figure 3.2.

*Figure 3.2. Components of Data Analysis. Adapted from “Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook” by M. B. Miles & A. M. Huberman, (1999). Copyright 1999 by Sage Publications.*
Utilizing the 15-point checklist devised by Braun and Clarke (2006) assisted in the process of thematically analyzing the data. Table 3.5 outlines their 15-point checklist of criteria for good thematic analysis.

Table 3.5

**A 15-point Checklist of Criteria for Good Thematic Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transcription</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The data have been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tapes for “accuracy.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Each data item has been given equal attention in the coding process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Themes have not been generated from a few vivid examples (an anecdotal approach), but instead, the coding process has been thorough, inclusive and comprehensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>All relevant extracts for all each theme have been collated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Themes have been checked against each other and back to the original data set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Themes are internally coherent, consistent, and distinctive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Data have been analyzed - interpreted, made sense of - rather than just paraphrased or described.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Analysis and data match each other - the extracts illustrate the analytic claims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Analysis tells a convincing and well-organized story about the data and topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>A good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts is provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Enough time has been allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Report</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>The assumptions about, and specific approach to, thematic analysis are clearly explicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>There is a good fit between what you claim you do, and what you show you have done – i.e., described method and reported analysis are consistent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>The language and concepts used in the report are consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>The researcher is positioned as active in the research process; themes do not just ‘emerge.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from: “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology” 2006, by V. Braun and V. Clarke, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, p. 96. Copyright 2006 by Qualitative Research in Psychology.
The checklist outlines the importance of transcribing the data and its accuracy, coding the data several times to be thorough, inclusive, and comprehensive, generating relevant themes, checking to establish that the themes are coherent, consistent, and distinctive. It provides structure in analyzing the data by ensuring that the information was interpreted, captured, matched, and told the story of each participant’s views and linked the narrative to illustrative extracts. Spending time to assess, review, revise, and edit the work meets the recommended checklist.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this research study was to explore the perceptions of the students and faculty of OYR Program. Conducting a qualitative phenomenological research design study was the most suitable choice for engaging the participants and hearing their lived experiences. The use of in-depth interviews and focus groups were ideal methods of collecting the data to facilitate the process of hearing the voices, observing the behaviors and body language of the participants (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Guest et al., 2012). Conducting the interviews supported the thoughts of Merriam and Tisdell (2015) that to establish rigor in qualitative research the researcher’s presence, the nature of the interaction between researcher and participants, the triangulation of data, the interpretation of perception, and generating rich, thick descriptions from the data was vital. The authors also argued that data collection and analysis begin at the onset of the research and that it is not linear, but simultaneous. The authors referred to this process as a constant comparison and stated that it is a process which allows the ongoing interaction of attaining insights, checking, and clarifying information gathered so that refinement and or reformulation occurs.
Similarly, Miles et al. (2014) refer to analysis as three concurrent flows of activity: (a) data condensation, (b) data display, and (c) conclusion drawing/verification. The authors highlighted the interconnectivity of the activities needed from the conceptualization of the study through analysis of data and report writing. Likewise, using the five phases of Braun and Clarke (2006) and the description of the processes generated an understanding of the steps involved in data collection, analysis, and outcome.

This chapter provided an overview of the methodology chosen for the study and covered research context, design, and the rationale for using the design, participant information, data collection, and analysis methods.
Chapter 4: Results

This chapter provides the findings of the qualitative study whose purpose was to explore the perceptions of the students and faculty about the One Year Residency Program using a phenomenological approach. The phenomenological approach afforded the researcher the opportunity to conduct the study in the participants’ natural settings, hear their voices, and capture the essence of their experiences. The researcher immersed herself in the data corpus by reading the transcriptions numerous times. Using the inductive approach, the researcher identified patterns and themes from the rich, thick, descriptions of the participant's perceptions and experiences and used the hermeneutic format for documenting the findings from the data. The researcher’s in-depth analysis of the data answered the three research questions guiding the study and outlined below:

1. What types of perceptions do the part-time social work graduate students have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?
2. What types of perceptions do social work faculty members have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?
3. What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state Licensed Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?

The students met the criteria for the study because they had the designated OYR status and attended the program during academic years 2016 and 2017. As it relates to
the faculty, they taught within the program during academic years 2016 and 2017 and, as such, met the criteria. The students in the focus groups answered research question 1 and research question 3 while the faculty in the individual interviews answered research questions 2 and research question 3. The researcher applied the same techniques to analyze the data set for each research question.

**Data Analysis and Findings**

The researcher conducted three student focus groups that represented a purposeful sample of participants registered as OYR students. From a list of 326, eight students completed a demographic profile meeting the criteria of being OYR students. The criteria for becoming an OYR student included having 2-year post bachelor’s work experience, obtaining a signed agreement form from the agency, and maintaining their employment while attending school. All eight students had bachelor’s degrees, and one reported already having a master’s degree. Of the eight students, five registered and enrolled in 2016, while three were in the 2017 cohort. Registered OYR students follow the pathway known as Time Frame I, II and III. Three students completed Time Frame I, three completed Time Frame II and were in Time Frame III, and two completed the program. Because of the time of year in conducting the study (June and July), no students were in Time Frame II. Of the eight student participants, seven identified as clinical while one identified as a Community Organizing Program Development student. Table 4.1 summarizes the academic years, time frame status and methods of the students.

The data revealed that there was more self-identified female (five) than male (three) participants, which is not surprising given the notion of social work being a female-dominated profession (NASW, 2012). Five students self-identified as
Hispanic/Latino, two as African American, and one as White Caucasian. As it relates to the marital status of the students, four identified as single, two were married, one was divorced, and one opted not to say. Table 4.2 identifies the breakdown for gender, ethnicity, and marital status.

Table 4.1

*Frequency Distribution of Participants by Academic Years, Time Frame Status and Methods.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>n=8</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrollment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Frames</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Frame I (End of Year 1 in OYR)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Frame II (End of Year 2 OYR Residency)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Frame III (Final Semester, Year 3)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP&amp; D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Each social work student chooses a method area of practice in which to concentrate their learning of micro or macro social work. COP&D is Community Organization Planning and Development.

All eight shared their job titles; three were case managers, one stated being a coordinator, two said they were directors, one was a mental health worker, and one a health educator. Because of working in settings such as homeless services (2), health and mental health (4), or child welfare (2), all eight students had income. One reported
annual salary at $30,000-$39,000, four reported salary between $40,000-$49,000, one between $50,000-$59,000, one between $70,000-$79,000 and one at the $100,000-$150,000 range. Table 4.3 outlines the job titles, employment settings, and income.

Table 4.2

*Frequency Distribution of Participants by Gender, Age, Ethnicity, & Marital Status*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>n=8</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African America</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not wanting to say</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher utilized several ways to ensure the rigor of data analysis. The researcher used van Manen’s (2016) six research activities and the approaches recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006) to ensure that the phenomenological perspective was central to the analysis. van Manen’s (2014) Activity I, is concerned with
the lived experiences of the individuals and ensuring that the researcher makes sense of
the phenomenon by giving it deep thought and questioning the participants’ accounts.
Through Activity II the researcher explored the experiences as lived by each OYR
student and faculty in the program, reflecting on emerging themes. Through Activity III
the researcher determined what made the OYR Program special, and in Activity IV,
described the phenomenon in writing or what is referred to as bringing the experience

*into speech.*

Table 4.3

*Frequency Distribution of the Student Participants by Job Titles, Employment Settings,
and Income Range*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>n=8</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Titles</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Managers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Worker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Educator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment Settings</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Mental Health</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Welfare</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income Range</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000-$39,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000-$49,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$59,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000-$79,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$150,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Activity V the researcher attempted to understand the phenomenon and maintain a strong relationship with the experiences of the OYR students and faculty. Finally, Activity VI, is concerned with putting it all together by looking at the entire picture and ensuring that each part makes up the whole system (van Manen, 2016).

The researcher chose latent/interpretative thematic analysis as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006). The latent/interpretative analysis allowed the researcher to identify and examine the underlying assumptions and conceptualizations of the participants, produce insightful analysis, and answer the research questions. The approach developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) also allowed the researcher to triangulate the data by utilizing others’ perspectives to ensure a richer interpretation of the data and this assisted with the analysis of identified themes. One way of triangulating the data included the use of the constructivist framework which underscores the use of the sociocultural and structural conditions to support the participants’ lived experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Following the recommendation to develop trustworthiness (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Shenton, 2004), the lens of the researcher and the constructivist position increased the credibility of the results. The researcher as the instrument (Creswell, 2013) conducted both sets of interviews in the setting of the participants. Because the researcher was employed for over 5 years at the institution where the study occurred, spending prolonged time within the environment was easily accomplished. Further, the researcher spent a significant amount of time (more than 8 hours) with direct interaction with the study’s participants. The researcher actively listened to the participants during data
collection in the three separate audio-recorded focus groups with students and four individual interviews with faculty. Rev.com, an independent group, transcribed the data.

Further, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended that peer review is an important part of data verification. Colleagues who are knowledgeable of the research process were included and used as sounding boards to debrief and decipher any biases, perspectives, and assumptions of the researcher. This dialogue helped the researcher become aware of her stance towards the data and analysis. The colleagues who assisted in the process were two doctors of philosophy teaching in other social work institutions, the chair and committee member of the dissertation committee, and colleagues familiar with the research.

From the completed transcriptions and with support from colleagues, the researcher utilized hermeneutic reflection (van Manen, 2016) and the six-phase process (Braun and Clarke, 2006) by reading and rereading the transcriptions to ascertain salient statements about the lived experiences of the OYR students and faculty. Three concurrent flows of activity of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, provided the framework for maintaining the relationship to understand the lived experiences of the OYR students and faculty (Miles et al., 2014). The statements became codes and themes relevant to the three research questions. First cycle coding – in vivo – short phrases from the participant’s own language in the data and second cycle coding – developing sub-codes to detail the entries of the participants was used (Miles et al., 2014). The researcher identified and grouped statements into themes representing thick, rich descriptions of the participants’ perceptions and used charts to represent the voices of all (Creswell, 2014; Shenton, 2004).
**Student findings.** The first research question sought to explore the types of perceptions the part-time social work graduate students have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program. Attaining a full understanding of the students’ perceptions about the OYR Program was achieved through the use of six interview questions that explored those perceptions. The researcher extracted and placed the themes from the three focus groups of eight students in two categories *before* and *after acceptance* to answer research question 1. The use of Time Frame I, II, III, and program completers to present the data after acceptance helped with the organization of the findings and best represented the themes and lived experiences of the students. Table 4.4 outlines the interview questions aligned to research question 1.

Table 4.4

*Summary of the Alignment Between Research Question 1 and the Interview Questions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Research Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What were the reasons as to why you selected the A Social Work One-Year Residency</td>
<td>RQ1: What types of perceptions do the part-time social work graduate students have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Program for Part-Time Professionals here at this academic institution?</td>
<td>regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What were the reasons as to why you selected the part-time program as opposed to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the full-time social work program?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How would you describe your overall experiences since enrolling in the OYR Program?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What have been your observations about the faculty and staff assistance provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within the OYR Program?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How has the OYR Program prepared you for the residency year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What are some of the challenges or concerns as you prepare for the residency year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Before acceptance. Overall, the responses were positive before program acceptance. The eight themes in Table 4.5 highlights the descriptors shared before acceptance into the institution as OYR students. The students provided information they heard about the innovative program implemented within the school where they have access as they could not afford to give up their jobs to attend school. They discussed the affordability of the school’s tuition, its reputation, the social justice lens of the program, its rich history of being embedded in the community, and hearing from their supervisors, about the rich experiences of the OYR students.

Additionally, the students indicated that they received positive and consistent feedback from their colleagues about the institution’s OYR Program and witnessed alumni’s and colleagues’ promotions. The students mentioned hearing about the strong historical legacy of the program, and honoring individuals who acquired work experience. One student responded to the question of perception this way:

I liked that I could continue to work while attending school. I work in all those underserved communities for my organization, so I thought the school’s location is appropriate. I just heard that it's very big on social justice so, I took a chance and just only applied here, and that was it for me. It's here or nowhere else. I wasn't going to bother with any other private institutions, so, that was it. I also could not afford not to work and go to school. (Student 3)

In another focus group one student commented, “So, I was attracted to OYR, because it was like, okay, we're going to give you only 1 year to be in field placement because we validate and trust that you've been doing this work over time” (Student 6). Another student said,
I guess to add, as a concept, I think that it pretty much is a brilliant concept. I think it appears to attract a more mature crowd, people who have been in the field for years and, you know, for whatever reason, decide that they want to go back to improve their education. (Student 7)

Table 4.5 highlights key thoughts from the graduates on the program before acceptance.

Table 4.5

*Summary of the Themes, Quotes, and Assertions Prior to Acceptance to the One-Year Residency Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
<th>Assertions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before Acceptance</td>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>“I was happy that this school offered the OYR model, that the tuition was affordable and that I could maintain working as I could not attend school full-time.”</td>
<td>Affordable Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>“This is the only school that I applied to for acceptance.”</td>
<td>Good School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>“I delayed my entrance because I could not afford to attend school full time without working. I was working and did not want to quit my job to attend school full time.”</td>
<td>Working Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Justice</td>
<td>“This school is about social justice.”</td>
<td>Important Issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Innovative</td>
<td>“When you’re working in the field, whatever you’re doing, it’s nice that someone values and validates and like accounts for something and is not making me jump through an extra hoop.”</td>
<td>Attractive Choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historical Legacy</td>
<td>“At work, we had a lot of interns from the institution, they were smart and knew a lot. So, I decided that was the school to go to, and I applied.”</td>
<td>Generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
<td>“The website talks about advocacy and working in communities of color to address issues and needs of individual, families, communities, and organizations.”</td>
<td>Appealing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Growth</td>
<td>“I think it appears to attract a more mature crowd. People who have been in the field for years and, you know, for whatever reason, decide that they want to go back to improve their education.”</td>
<td>Necessity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All the OYR students expressed compelling feelings about returning to school while knowing that they could not afford to give up their jobs. As such, selecting the OYR Program over attending full-time, most of the students mentioned and focused on accessibility, affordability, the ability to remain working while attending school, and validation of their work experiences remained critically important. The students appreciated the existence of the OYR Program as they responded this way:

This was the only program that offered me the opportunity to attend school and remain working. I needed to keep working as I needed food and a roof over my head and as such I could not attend school full time. (Student 1)

Another student added,

For me, having so much experience and returning to school was something that I needed. I was happy that this school offered the OYR model, that the tuition was affordable and that I could maintain working as I could not attend school full-time. (Student 5)

One student bridged the conversation this way:

Because I didn't have time. I didn't have time to do the 2-year thing. It would have been hard for me to leave a career, go back to school, not only for economic reasons but to sit in a classroom with folks who the majority have not entered the workforce or been in social work. (Student 6)

One student expressed attending the full-time program but realized that the need to remain working was critical. The student stated:

Originally, I thought that I could attend school full-time and not work. I was accepted as a full-time student, but before coming in, I delayed my entrance
because I could not afford to attend school full-time without working. I was working and did not want to quit my job to attend school full-time. I wanted to continue being independent and not return to my parents’ home to attend school. I worked in different agencies and had colleagues who attended school and work simultaneously so that option was the best. (Student 2)

Finally, another student captured the feeling this way:

At work, we had a lot of interns from the institution, they were smart and knew a lot. So, I decided that was the school to go to, and I applied. I also had to keep my job as I have a lot of responsibilities. I could not afford to attend school full-time, and this was the option of graduate school, keeping my job and getting an education. (Student 5)

The students understood that they needed a program where they could work and attend school simultaneously.

In addition to not giving up their jobs to attend school, students discussed the school’s social justice framework which influenced their decisions to attend the program. The students reported choosing a social work program which focused on a social justice lens to provide services to individuals, families, and communities. The students stated; “This school is well known for the social justice lens, the professors and being a public institution (All Students). “The school is very diverse, and it's in the heart of the city, it is in the middle of the community, and this is the community where I am from” (Student 3).

Others added, “This school is about social justice, the website talks about advocacy and working in communities of color to address issues and needs of individual, families, communities, and organizations” (Student 4). “The school talks about
theoretical framework and applying theories in real life practice” (Student 5). One student discussed the fact that the agency provided services to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community and stated,

> We specialize in providing LGBT identified individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 experiencing homelessness with services including shelter, crisis management, and case management. All the services. That's what we do. And so, a couple of years working there, I saw that for the positions that I wanted, that I aspired to do, you need an advanced degree. (Student 5)

The school’s social justice lens was a draw for five of the students and was a theme that permeated throughout the discussions. The students felt that the social justice lens the school espoused separated them from other social work academic institutions in the surrounding community. All the students stated that the school was their first choice, or as one said, “This is the only school that I applied to for acceptance” (Student 5). Seven of the eight students identified as students of color working with a population that shared a similar background, heritage, and culture and faced similar injustices. Two students classified this sentiment. Student 3 stated:

> OYR students see themselves as being representative of their community and full of rich experiences to utilize in the workplace by addressing client needs. The OYR students work in the communities daily and are privy to the needs of the clients, who are vulnerable, oppressed and living in poverty.

The student continued the conversation and remarked, “OYR students know what people are facing, we work in the communities” (Student 3).
Accessibility, affordability, and the ability to remain working while attending school are not new phenomena for employed students. Numerous researchers have outlined the same findings that employed students want to improve themselves but cannot afford to give up their jobs to return to school (Haffey & Starr, 1988; Miller et al., 2015; Moriarty et al., 2011; Starr & Walker, 1982). Access to social work education remains critical to employed students. While they see the value of education, the overarching theme of gaining access and remaining in the work environment is critical.

**Experience after acceptance.** Moving to the community of the academic institution was the focus of the remaining interview questions to complete answering research question 1. These questions provided the students the opportunity to describe their overall experiences, assistance provided from the faculty, and preparation, challenges, and concerns regarding the residency year – Time Frame II.

The students’ perspectives varied depending on their time frames. Three students were in Time Frame I, three completed Time Frame II (residency year) and were in Time Frame III, and two students completed the program. Concurrent flow of data condensing was used to analyze the data in this segment (Miles et al., 2015).

**First year students in time frame I.** Every student within the study completed Time Frame I. However, of the eight students participating in the focus groups, three recently completed Time Frame I (first-year), two were women and one was male. Of interest, they were in all three focus groups. All three students shared both positive and negative perspectives about their overall experiences and the support received from faculty and staff. Table 4.6 outlines the themes, quotes, and assertions of the students in Time Frame I.
The Time Frame I students indicated an overall positive experience as their responses included “having a good or great first year” (Student 2); that they “felt connected to the program given the 1-year long class each entering student must take” (Student 4); “they felt supported, learned a lot and accomplished something” (Student 8). Simultaneously, one student expressed frustration recalling that information was not as forthright regarding the identification of the professors and stated, “one was almost an hour late for a class and no one said anything” (Student 4). One student provided a different perspective and stated feeling duped about the program. The student stated, 

My main reason for selecting the OYR Program is because I didn't know any better. I mean, it just sounded like the perfect match. You know, I get to work and go to school, but the first thing that I found out that I was highly disappointed about learning that being an OYR student you were excluded from any scholarship. You're not eligible for grant opportunities, because you are considered a part-time student. I felt duped because my salary hasn't caught up with my educational improvement yet. I'm probably more in the hole now than I would have been if I would have gone full-time, even though full-time would have been a lot more challenging. (Student 7)

During these exchanges, while the other students nodded and supported the students during the description of the experience, no one changed their minds about the importance of the experience and accepting their seat in the OYR Program.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
<th>Assertions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Frame I</td>
<td>Had a great 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; year</td>
<td>It would not have been the same experience as I am having currently. Professor wise, I had a first great year.</td>
<td>Due to professors had a great year. Sense of accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finishing the time frames is a big</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oyr students</td>
<td>feel connected as a cohort because of the</td>
<td></td>
<td>Engaging, Comradery, Similar stories, Support, And Congregation of experienced people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-year long course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>Flexibility with deadlines</td>
<td>Flexibility with deadlines give the impression of poor standards</td>
<td>Change of heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>The diversity in the evenings is powerful</td>
<td>The diversity in the evenings is powerful as you see people of every race, nationality, and women who are responsible for their families. We all have access, going through similar struggles and don’t have the privilege of not working.</td>
<td>Differences in day and evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as you see people of every race, nationality, and women who are responsible for their families. We all have access, going through similar struggles and don’t have the privilege of not working.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not-knowing</td>
<td>One of my classes, I didn't know who my professor was until the day of class when the person walked in and then she was like almost an hour late.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it relates to the points where the confrontation occurred with the first-year students on their assertions, one student indicated that the flexibility with deadlines
afforded by the adjuncts gave the perception of poor standards in the OYR Program. One student put forth the argument that “when students have deadlines, they must meet them and not ask for extensions as the perception is that the program has poor standards and quality” (Student 2). The group challenged this perception and provided a different perspective. The student put forth an alternative view and stated, “When you have multiple papers, competing projects, familial responsibilities, or health concerns, then maybe someone providing an extension is humane and supportive” (Student 1). The student recanted and stated that “being single, having a supportive working environment, and downtime at work allowed for meeting the demands of the program” (Student 2). The student promised to keep this perspective going forward.

Another focus group interchange with students from different time frames providing support to the Time Frame I students focused on the importance of self-advocacy. All three students in Time Frame I mentioned their concerns about not knowing the process regarding next steps as they began to plan for Time Frame II in the fall of 2018. All mentioned the difficulties of not being clear on the process for the field placement tasks, getting in contact with the school’s personnel, having guidance from their agency personnel, and obtaining clear information about next steps. The program completers and the Time Frame III students provided clear and concise information to the Time Frame I students. They mentioned strategies such as making appointments, going to the offices and request meetings, and taking their concerns up the chain of command. The two graduates recalled using their relationships with management to get what they needed as they were working at the agency for 10 and 5 years respectively and were well known based on their work ethics. One Time Frame III student remarked, “I had to get
the Human Resource Department involved and included the issues of race and positionality in the dialogue” (Student 6). Another Time Frame III student said, “A colleague told me that the supervisor was in, send the e-mail right now” (Student 3).

Another area where there was evidence of support in the interchange occurred when one Time Frame I student mentioned being disappointed with not having the appropriate field of practice. The student mentioned wanting to practice in the field of gerontology but was told by the school’s administration that the field of practice area had the least number of registered students and as such the school could not add another class. The student indicated feelings of frustration as one course offered at 9:00 a.m. did not support the OYR class schedules. The program graduates and Time Frame III students in that focus group encouraged the student not to give up and offered suggestions such as taking the course at another institution or seeking outside knowledge upon graduation. The students discussed the process of life-long commitment to learning and reminded the student to keep focused and graduate.

All the program graduates and Time Frame III students felt that “as OYR students they had to problem solve, be the drivers in resolving issues, manage both the organization and the schools’ personnel, and ensured that they dotted all the I’s and crossed the T’s” (Student 1, 3, 4, 6 & 7). The onus was on the OYR students to ensure that they met all the criteria, followed up timely, and knew and addressed all the pitfalls of being in the program. Regardless though, the OYR students report that they were together and that with support, the knowledge they brought to the classroom and their commitment to the process was unique.
One student reminded the group about the essence of having classes in the evenings and the level of discussions the OYR students brought to the classroom. The student said, “To sit in class for 3 or 4 hours, you needed to have a great class discussion. Normally everybody brought their stuff to the table” (Student 5).

**Time frame III students.** The students who recently completed Time Frame II (residency year) and enrolled in Time Frame III expressed the least positive overall experiences and identified numerous challenges and concerns within the program. Given the time of the study, (June and July) there were no students enrolled in Time Frame II as that ended in May. However, because the three Time Frame III students recently completed it, they cited issues affecting their overall perception of the program. The Time Frame III students’ reflections centered on the lack of preparation leading to the residency year, lack of support from the school and agency personnel, the limitations of the program, and feelings evoked because of the lack of preparation. Table 4.7 depicts some of the quotes from the students regarding the lack of preparation for the residency year.

*Lack of preparation for residency year from the academic institution.** The perceived lack of preparation for the residency year of the OYR student had the least positive references relating to the students’ experiences. Five of the eight students completed their residency year, and they all agreed that the school did not prepare them for the residency year. Table 4.7 depicts the category, codes, and themes relating to the students perceived lack of preparation from the academic institution as the time approached for Time Frame II.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of preparation for residency year</td>
<td>“Not a lot of preparation. It was sorely lacking. You submitted your forms at admissions, then nothing else until it was close to the end of the school year in the spring” (Student 1 &amp; 7).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“You are on your own. No one said anything to you; you had to fend for yourself once the conversations came up about field placement in the fall” (Student 4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It was stressful, as some people lost their jobs in the summer and had to navigate the systems by themselves” (Student 6).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The agencies had their problems too. Some lost the initial option for the supervisors, some lost funding. In my case the FI left, I had to figure it out with the agency on my own without any support from the school. I had to rely on the fact that I have a relationship with management to fix my situation. Other students were not so lucky some lost their jobs; some had to wait until almost at the end to find out if they had placements-very nerve-racking.” (Student 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Getting ready to go to Time Frame II now for the fall, very little information or conversation regarding the process for the fall.” “I am taking the summer off so that I can follow up once I know next steps.” “My coworker and I are talking to our supervisors, and they indicated that they know the next steps as they are familiar with the process.” (Student 2, 5 &amp; 8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The five students were in different focus groups but the themes of lack of understanding of the process for residency year was strong and significant. They all agreed that the lack of information from the school created problems for their understanding of tasks which needed prioritizing, dealing, and coping with the process, and preparing them for the dual role of living as a student and employee. For example, one task that needed prioritization was ensuring that each student had a qualified
instructor/supervisor versed in the methodology of the student, knowing if the student will remain in the same department for the task assignment, and identifying the tasks to create the bridging of theory and practice in the field experience. This task ensures the alignment of the agency, school, and student in meeting the critical need of having the field placement opportunity in place. Table 4.8 provides details on lack of preparation.

Table 4.8

*Summary of the Categories, Codes, and Theme Relating to the Lack of Preparation Provided by Their Academic Institutions for Time Frame II (Residency)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Frame II</td>
<td>Not a lot of preparation, on your own, nerve racking.</td>
<td>Lack of understanding of the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very little information or conversation.</td>
<td>Lack information in dealing and coping with the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delay in reviewing agency agreement form.</td>
<td>No communication with the agency regarding structure, compliance, and program needs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Field education, the pedagogy of social work education, is critical, as no student can obtain a social work degree without going through the field placement process. The students recalled having to become problem solvers to begin the process of communication with their agencies, having to take on the responsibility of making sure that they identified the supervisors, and became the conduit for balancing the information between their agencies and school. The students indicated that they relied on the knowledge of their supervisors about the process while others indicated feelings of
frustration due to not getting support from either their supervisor or the institution. One student summed up the lack of information this way:

Not a lot of preparation. It was sorely lacking. You submitted your forms at admissions, then nothing else until it was close to the end of the school year in the spring. You are on your own. No one said anything to you; you had to fend for yourself once the conversations came up about field placement in the fall. It was stressful, as some people lost their jobs in the summer and had to navigate the systems by themselves. (Student 3)

Another student said, “Honestly, I feel like I'm not preparing. I'm going in there like All right, let's see what's going to be thrown at me” (Student 8). Another student agreed and added, “Field was the big thing. I got through the first year, and then it was now we are going to add a new schedule to be able to do that my second year was much more difficult for me” (Student 5).

The lack of preparation placed students in the middle of trying to navigate, secure, address, and synchronize information between the school and agency. Having the additional burden of facilitating the process raised concerns and challenges about the lack of support, burn out, and limitations of the OYR Program.

*Lack of support from the employers.* Navigating, fending, and sacrificing were constant themes during Time Frame II. The students mentioned the difficulties in attempting to find out the logistics for their placements. For example, wanting to know who would provide their supervision, if they would remain in their same unit or location, and bridge their needs with the school or the agency. Table 4.9 depicts the category,
codes, and themes relating to the students perceived lack of preparation from their place of employment as the time approached for Time Frame II.

Three of the five students mentioned issues with the placements including having to travel from one borough or location to participate in supervision as there was no licensed social worker at their place of employment. Another student mentioned having difficulties with securing a field placement within the agency and not having a social worker on board versed in macro practice method area. Still another focused on time management and said this:

Now regarding the time, the expectation was that I was still going to work Monday through Friday, 8-4 with a 1-hour lunch break which sometimes I did not take. And then find, however, I can, fit in whatever hours I needed to do my therapy because I was doing therapy, talk therapy, with the clients. (Student 4)

Table 4.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Frame II</td>
<td>No planning for field placement responsibilities.</td>
<td>Lack of support from the Employer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff turnover</td>
<td>Lack of preparedness or orientation to the field placement plan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating, Fending and Sacrificing.</td>
<td>Delay in programmatic decisions affecting placements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Changes within organizational structure. Communicating with the academic institution.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lacks appropriate field instruction supervisors for macro method.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One student mentioned the dilemma of the dual role of being a student and staff member, and its effect on completing assigned tasks. The student reported that to complete the documentation on clients served, the supervisor’s credential is used to document the work (Student 7). The group discussed the perceived ethical connotations, but when asked by another student, if in the staff role they saw similar clients and signed off, the student responded yes (Student 7). The group then dismissed the perception of fiduciary inappropriateness and focused instead on the complicated role of simultaneously being a student and employee within one’s organization.

Managing multiple realities during the residency year is challenging and calls for creativity, organizational skills, time management, and commitment. The OYR students consistently managed multiple tasks simultaneously and were often surprised at the level of sacrifice they endured to succeed within the program. The OYR students, often compartmentalized their time attempting to manage their existence during the 2½ years within the institution. One student summarized the experience this way – “I would drive here from like the far end of Brooklyn or Bronx, to make it happen because I told myself it must happen. You must make the sacrifice. It became a sacrifice at some point” (Student 3).

**Effect on students.** The theme of being alone and overwhelmed permeated throughout the discussions within two of the three focus groups. The common thread of the discussions centered on feeling stressed, being exhausted, and overwhelmed with both school and work responsibilities. Table 4.10 depicts the category, codes, and themes relating to the effect the lack of preparation had on students who completed Time Frame II and were in Time Frame III.
The students remarked that they encountered field instructors who were inflexible with managing the work and field hours, time, placed more value on the work hours, and added tasks which complicated the students’ time. One student stated, “You have 5 hours a week with the talk therapy clients. I must travel to clinical supervision with the supervisor off-site. Plus, the treatment team meeting, any case conferences, task supervision when I needed it” (Student 5). The other student added to the conversation by stating, “My memory was shot too by the end. I started to forget everything that was going on. We're doing a lot, and the learning was different” (Student 3).

One student linked the idea of taking on the student role as contributing to the stressors within the workplace. The student shared the transition from the confident, respected, and knowledgeable employee to a student novice learning a new way of thinking, assessing, and intervening. The student summed it up this way,

For me, building myself up as an employee was so important that I felt deflated almost when I was in my student role. It was hard to switch gears, which was difficult. I think the hard part was I developed myself in the agency, so I felt so sure, of myself and my role and my job. And then I went to the internship, and I had to kind of like I just felt like I was there for the first time and that feeling of having to build my reputation and prove myself. It was humbling, but the power dynamics you were used to were off. (Student 5)

The students also linked the feelings of exhaustion to the classroom. The required readings, the discussions, and activities, although they were learning it was also difficult. One student stated, “At 6 to 10 o'clock at night, we were struggling, we were tired, exhausted” (Student 3).
Table 4.10

Summary of the Categories, Codes, and Theme Relating to the Effect the Lack of Preparation had on Students Who Completed Time Frame II (Residency Year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Frames II and III</td>
<td>No adequate time of planning field placement responsibilities</td>
<td>Inflexibility with managing field placement hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bridging issues between organization and school. Managing multiple roles.</td>
<td>Placed value on agency work. Addition of work task assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem solvers, tired, overwhelmed, stress, exhaustion</td>
<td>Self-Advocacy Relied on relationships to resolve problems Burnout and isolated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another stressful area accounted for by the students was the various documentation needed for field placement and work. The students discussed the issues of completing the various documentation for the field, to include writing process recordings and/or logs – a tool used in supervision to identify and discuss the new learning of the student in supervision. The students recalled the number of process recordings and logs as cumbersome, as there was no set requirement for the number of logs or recordings from the school. In discussion with their peers, they found out that some only did one per week while others completed three per week. One student recalled having submitted “30 in one semester” (Student 5). What complicated the documentation process further was the fact that they were also responsible for the completion of work-related documentation. The documentation, they reported, was cumbersome, as depending on your job title and work setting, the multiple assessments and progress notes, reports on
behalf of clients, or outcomes needed was based on private or governmental funding. Students recalled having to take work home, working longer hours, and extending their work week to meet the demands of documentation. The students all agreed that there was no relief and no one to advocate on their behalf to reduce the workload. The student said, “What more can I do? I was already barely getting through; there would be at some point you were tired and exhausted” (Student 3).

Similarly, the discussions focused on the new learning, awareness, and self-development which occurred during time spent within the institutions. The students recalled learning about new theories like the just practice framework, social and economic injustices, and wanting to apply the new learning in the work environment. There was agreement that they had no place for input, expression, or implementation. One student used the metaphor of feeling like “a hamster running on the wheel but with no place to go” (Student 5). Another said, “I didn’t have anyone to look at my logs and help me with implementing the things we were talking about in the classroom and infuse it in the agency” (Student 6). The lack of opportunity to process, implement, and try out new ideas further contributed to the feelings of disillusionment, isolation, and burnout within the agencies.

**Program graduates.** The two students who completed the program were female. They reported feelings of happiness at completion and were more reflective in their account of the experience. Table 4.11 summarizes the category, themes, quotes, and assertions from the graduate students’ perspective of the program after completion. They spoke about their experiences from the perspective of mastering the trials, tribulations, and adversity within the program. Using the lens of mastery, they described their overall
experience as rigorous, having a challenging workload, understood the importance of establishing supportive relationships among their peers, and constantly receiving feedback and support. They also discussed the flexibility of some of the professors, and at one point indicated that the professors who taught in the evenings seemed tired as they too are OYR adjuncts (have multiple roles, tasks, but pushing through). Both students remarked that “their experiences were great and that they would not have done it any other way even though all the I’s were not dotted” (Student 3).

During the exchange in one of the focus groups, a student in Time Frame III expressed doubts about completing the program while the student in Time Frame I listened attentively. The student spoke about the hardships and frustrations experienced and the notion of job insecurity at program completion. The student said, “My supervisor said, “I'd love to keep you as a social worker after you graduate, but I know we’re not going to because we don't have the budget for the social worker” (Student 5). The student who completed the program was reassuring to the student and then stated, “Come to our agency, we do a lot of hiring. We are the second largest in housing in the state. Come my way after you graduate” (Student 3). The OYR students, as a cohort, exemplify the notion of supporting each other.

During another interchange, the program completers offered positive advice and support to the students in their interviews. In one exchange the program graduates reminded the other students of always being mindful of the politics within their organizations where you are not only an employee but also a student managing difficult conversations and multiple tasks. One student put it this way, “It's not diplomatic. You
can't say no to your supervisor” (Student 5), Another said, “Saying no, I have a hard time doing” (Student 3).

Table 4.11

*Summary of the Themes, Quotes, and Assertions from the Graduate Students’ General Perspective of the One-Year Residency Program After Graduation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
<th>Assertions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>Rigors of the program</td>
<td>My experience was great. I finished my course load and graduated in May 2018.</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program Limitations</td>
<td>I still would not have done it any other way. I don't think all the I’s were dotted. But it's a little bit of a janky system.</td>
<td>Acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No break in the school year</td>
<td>The workload was challenging, but with support from other colleagues, peers, and students it was worth it.</td>
<td>Cannot do it alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>generally supportive</td>
<td>Some faculty was rigid, others were amenable and flexible, but at the end, they wanted the papers. They were willing to work with you and made sure that you had support.</td>
<td>Faculty support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of OYR students</td>
<td>Adjuncts seem tired but helpful</td>
<td>We had a lot of adjuncts, and as such they too were tired, but they tried, and they participated and made sure that we had the information.</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of interest is that both students who completed the program were women, albeit from the different ethnic groups. The similarities between both women were that they completed the program within 2 years by using the winter breaks to take additional classes. They both focused on the clinical track, and one got married while attending school. Completing graduate school was a huge achievement for the two students. They were committed to their education, accepted the limitations of the program, understood
that they needed support, relied on members of their cohort for support, and created time management tools to help with navigating school, work, and life.

**Challenges and concerns within the OYR Program.** In every focus group, the theme of limited access for learning opportunities, courses, and specialized subjects with tenured full-time professors (due to scheduling realities of OYR students) came up as challenges and concerns for the program. Table 4.12 depicts the category, codes, and themes of the perceptions of the OYR students relating to the lack of preparation due to the absence of tenured full-time faculty teaching in the OYR Program.

Although the students linked the unavailability of tenured faculty teaching in the OYR Program to scheduling realities of both the program and students, they expressed feeling like being the stepchild, receiving less than other programs, and experiencing a lower standard of education. One student summed it up this way:

I don't have access to those tenured professors that are respected and have a lot of experience. Who gets them? The people who are in the 2-year daytime program who tend to be younger, tend not to have as much experience as the OYR students bring to the room. (Student 5)

Additionally, the conversation centered on feelings of not having the experience of being students, given their dual role of student and employee. One student said, “it's almost like being in school and not being in school at the same time, which is somewhat challenging because I think that we are systematically denied the benefits of being a student” (Student 7).
Table 4.12

Summary of the Category, Codes, and Themes of the General Perceptions Relating to the Lack of Preparation due to Programmatic Concerns in the OYR Program Among the Graduate Students Who Reached and/or completed Time Frame III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Frame III Schedule realities of OYR Students, faculty and staff</td>
<td>Lack of full-time tenured professors teaching in the OYR Program</td>
<td>Limitations of the OYR Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unavailability of staff in the evenings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schedule realities of OYR classes</td>
<td>Lacks experience of being students because of the need to work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significant Adjunct as lecturers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower standard of education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another student agreed and stated “I also wish we could have had exposure to what happens in the daytime. Those lunch-and-learns that you guys have. You bring in special guests and speakers, but that is only happening between 9-5” (Student 5). Others mentioned the lack of availability of staff in the evenings because most of the staff and faculty are unavailable after hours. Not only the staff are not available, but due to their schedules, once they enter campus, there is no time to meet with anyone. The student remarked, “We don't have access to office hours in general” (Student 4). A student agreed and pointed out, “Although OYR is not all that now that I’m in it, on paper, it sounds beautiful, and it's perfect, and it's great, yes, this is what I want. But after you're in it, you're like, eh” (Student 7)

Faculty. The four faculty interviews answered research question 2 which explored their perceptions of the social work 1-year residency graduate program. The researcher utilized the same in-depth analysis techniques from student data set to inform
the faculty data set. Table 4.13 shows the interview questions aligned with the research question 2.

Table 4.13

Summary of the Alignment between Research Question 2 and the Interview Questions as presented to the Four Social Work One-Year Residency Program Faculty Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Research Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What were the reasons as to why you decided to teach here in this social work</td>
<td>RQ2: What types of perceptions do social work faculty members have regarding the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Year Residency Graduate Program for Part-time professionals at this academic</td>
<td>Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institution?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In your opinion, how does the OYR curriculum design and instruction prepare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and develop future social workers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How would you describe your overall experiences as a faculty member in the OYR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What have been your overall observations about the part-time students enrolled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within the OYR Program at this institution?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. From your experience, how has the OYR Program prepared students for their</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>residency year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What are some of the challenges within the OYR Program particularly as the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students prepare for their residency year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Faculty demographics.** The four faculty had over 35 years teaching in the academic institution, all taught in the 1-Year Residency Program and were in the academic institution during the academic years 2016 and 2017. Three of the four held leadership roles, three were full-time associate professors, and one was an adjunct. All
faculty had Ph.D. degrees, three were licensed social workers, two were student alumni, and the gender of the faculty were evenly distributed – two males and two females. Of the four faculty members, one was recruited specifically for the OYR Program. Table 4.14 provides demographic information on each faculty.

Table 4.14

*Demographic Profile of the Four Social Work One-Year Residency Program Faculty Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty 1</th>
<th>Faculty 2</th>
<th>Faculty 3</th>
<th>Faculty 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D. Associate Professor</td>
<td>Ph.D. Adjunct</td>
<td>Ph.D. Associate Professor</td>
<td>Ph.D. Associate Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership role</td>
<td>OYR student 30 years ago</td>
<td>Leadership role</td>
<td>Leadership role Full time student 30 years ago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruited to the institution for the OYR Program</td>
<td>Licensed Clinical Social Worker</td>
<td>Licensed Clinical Social Worker</td>
<td>Licensed Master Social Worker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Faculty findings. After applying the same careful review to the data collected, coding the data set, and winnowing the themes to a manageable few (Ryan & Bernard, 2003), there are five themes presented to the readers to answer the types of perceptions faculty holds regarding the OYR Program. The five themes are (a) endorsement of the OYR Program Model, (b) accreditation of the institution OYR Program, (c) knowledge of the institution, (d) lack of preparation, and (e) structural issues with the OYR Program.
Endorsement of the OYR Program model. All faculty endorsed the OYR Program model, agreeing that it was an excellent model and they wanted to teach in the program. Table 4.15 outlines the codes, categories, and the theme of the faculty’s response to their reasons for teaching in the OYR Program. All four faculty combined, had taught in the academic institutions for decades. The institution is a method-based school, meaning each student, before acceptance, determines their method of concentration by choosing clinical, organizational management and leadership, or community organizing and program development. All four faculty entered the institution citing purposes such as altruism – wanting to give back (Faculty 2 and 4), of being recruited to develop one method specifically in the OYR Program (Faculty 1) and wanting to develop future social workers (Faculty 3).

Faculty 1 and Faculty 2 were female and felt that due to their experiences as students, they felt connected to the program and as such, wanted to give back to the school or work specifically in the OYR Program.

One of the faculty mentioned choosing to teach in the OYR Program because of the evening hour schedules and feeling an affinity to the students of color, the knowledge they bring to the classroom, and the reciprocal nature of the relationship with the OYR students. The faculty shared that the OYR students understood the issues affecting their communities and they were open and honest in the classroom. The faculty also shared a determination to implement change within the OYR students as they, at times, were judgmental and harsh in their description of service users (Faculty 4).

The faculty recruited specifically to design and reshape a method area within the institution shared the reasons for teaching in the program. The faculty shared that the
school had an administrative methodology for the students, but with the evolving changes in the social work practice to include expanding to social enterprise, the school moved in the direction of change. The faculty expressed the challenges of beginning that change in process, culture, and vision of the Organization Management and Leadership (OML) division and remarked that 5 years later, there was progress.

Table 4.15

*Codes, Categories, and Theme of the Faculty’s Reasons for Teaching in the One-Year Residency Program.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruited to the institution specifically to establish the Organization Management and Leadership Method using the OYR Model (Faculty 1)</td>
<td>Targeted Expertise in Organizational Management and Leadership Method</td>
<td>Endorses the OYR Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused on Development of Managers (Faculty 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanting to give back and fix it (Faculty 2)</td>
<td>Historical Legacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Professor (Faculty 3) Decided to enter academia following years in community-based organizations. Wanted to develop future social workers. (Faculty 3)</td>
<td>Institutional Commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chose to work in the OYR Program (Faculty 4)</td>
<td>Expertise in Clinical Method</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had multiple responsibility evenings worked better (Faculty 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students bring practice issues to the classroom (Faculty 4)</td>
<td>Commitment to the development of social workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The diversity of students in the OYR Program (Faculty 4)</td>
<td>Gatekeeper to the profession choices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The faculty indicated that the students who were choosing the OML method, had management experiences, were leaders within their organizations, second career opportunists, were not necessarily from a social services background but did not have the theoretical knowledge of why they were taking a particular step. The faculty said this in describing the students who choose OML:

Well, we're preparing social work managers, and these are students who are already managers, but for the most part, they have no training in management. They're just doing it. Occasionally, we'll have some people who come in with master’s in public administration (MPA) degrees, and they have the strength, and so, we're training them on what they should be doing as managers. And so, there is a big contrast, often, to what they've developed as their management technique and skill, themselves. And so, the disconnect between what they should be doing, in theory, and what they are doing is sometimes upsetting to people and sometimes helpful for them in knowing how to handle situations that they've been just doing kind of on the fly. (Faculty 1)

The charge within the method area of OML was to prepare students by honing their knowledge in “hard and soft skills relevant to assuming the posts of managers, directors, and chief executive officers” (Faculty 1).

Similarly, the faculty from the clinical method reported wanting to enter academia following years of working in community-based organizations and wanting to develop students with pre-MSW experience, as they were already working in the field (Faculty 3). The faculty discussed the importance of training social workers clinically, reminding the
researcher of the importance of gate-keeping to the profession. The faculty summed it up this way:

Well, I decided to teach in it because I felt very committed to, training social workers, and people who were doing social work, pre-MSW social work. I was committed to helping them to develop and grow so that they could at least be much more proficient in the work that they were doing, and beyond that. So, it was a level of commitment that I felt. (Faculty 3)

*Accreditation of the institution’s OYR Program.* The second theme – accreditation of the institution’s OYR Program – is significant as it centered the discussion on the curriculum, its design and the implicit and explicit expectation of instruction to social work students. Table 4.16 provides the codes, categories, and theme in addressing the curriculum, design, and instruction used to develop and prepare future social workers.

All four faculty were aware that the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) approves the institution’s curriculum. All four faculty took this seriously as they believed in the rigors of the curriculum and accepted the standard approved by the governing body, the institution, and the National Association of Social Workers. The faculty also mentioned the internal oversight of the curriculum committee, whose vigilance and support were key to ensuring compliance and rigor. For example, one faculty mentioned the competency factor outlined by CSWE, that each student must possess and that the syllabi include the competencies each semester (Faculty 3). Another faculty mentioned the recent audit of the school by CSWE, and the commendation from the investigator as the students raved about the Practice Lab course (Faculty 4). Additionally, one faculty mentioned the internal system of control in bringing a student before the Education
Review Committee (ERC) if there were concerns regarding the efficacy of the student meeting the demands of the classwork requirement.

Of interest though, was how each used a different lens to discuss specific areas where preparation occurs. For example, one faculty focused on the fact that since the OYR students come in with a wealth of experience, the curriculum design for the first year begins with all classes. The assumption being that since the OYR students were working, they were now learning the theoretical framework for accomplishing the work. The faculty said this;

Well, my understanding is that if the curriculum is different from the 2-year program is that it honors the fact that students are coming in with a wealth of pre-MSW experience. Therefore, unlike the 2-year students that start doing their field placement in conjunction with their coursework the OYR students are in a different process. Therefore, the OYR students start with coursework. (Faculty 3)

Another faculty mentioned that as the chair for one of the methods, they are constantly reviewing the curriculum to meet the demands of the program. The faculty summed it up this way; “We're constantly tinkering with the curriculum. After the first 2 years of running this, we just finished the fifth year; we had no course content on contracts and contract management. So, we carved out some space to do that” (Faculty 1).

The other two faculty focused primarily on the practice lab class in preparing future social workers. First-year students, regardless of their methods, must register for practice lab both in the fall and spring. Both professors shared the importance of the practice lab class, as they both agreed that this was the class where you hear directly from the OYR students. The students share what is happening in social work, how it is
affecting their practice, provide information on theoretical frameworks and you have a full year to educate, hone, and develop their skills, while simultaneously changing perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes. The professor termed this as a “reciprocal relationship in educating the OYR students” (Faculty 4).

Table 4.16

*Codes, Categories and Theme of the Faculty’s Perceptions of the Curriculum Design and Instruction to Prepare Future Social Workers in the One-Year Residency Program.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific Curriculum Design of the OYR Program (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Accreditation of the institution OYR Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method Driven School (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Choice of methodological study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students within the institution (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>MSW students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire knowledge within the institution (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Access to learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-chaired the Practice Lab (Faculty 3, 4)</td>
<td>Structured Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to have access to specialized classes-Trauma (Faculty 2)</td>
<td>Lack of availability of certain classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Completion (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get promoted, become colleagues, friend, pursue higher education, are strategic in their decisions, increase understanding of social work (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Finally, all four professors acknowledged that if they did not meet the standards outlined in the curriculum, then they would not have the number of OYR students.
participating in graduation. Graduation signifies for them that the graduates have met the
rigors of the curriculum, regardless of the pathway, and that through completing the work
and meeting expectations from the classes, the student is prepared to leave the institution
and reenter the profession as competent and qualified professionals.

Knowledge of the institution and OYR Program. The four-faculty emphasized
that their knowledge of the institution and the OYR Program contributed positively to
their experiences within the program. Table 4.17 depicts the code, categories, and
themes of the knowledge of the institution and the OYR Program.

All four faculty remarked about having positive experiences with the OYR
students within the social work academic institution. Of the four faculty, the least amount
of years worked within the institution was 5 and the maximum was 15. Because of the
institution’s historical place and foundation within the social work community since
1958, all four faculty indicated the their goals and vision were aligned with that of the
institution’s mission, vision, and goals. The faculty all agreed that the institution has
produced excellent work and has given rise to successful graduates who are committed to
the field of social work and the institution. The two faculty members who were graduates
of the program decades ago shared having great experiences as faculty. On the other
hand, when both used the student lens, they recalled different experiences as students.
They both attended the program in the late 1980s, one as an OYR student, and the other
worked while attending school full-time. The alumni OYR student-faculty shared the
feelings of disconnectedness and summed it up this way:

Back then I felt extremely disconnected. I’d come here for the classes. I had
problems with my field placement. I had no help from the school. So, I did my
own thing. You are disconnected. I mean, you show up in the evenings. (Faculty 2)

The other alumni stated that “I was focused and trying to respond to the issues relevant in the community” (Faculty 4). They both graduated, returned to the school, and attained their Ph.D. degrees and were now faculty within the program and were models of success to the students.

Table 4.17

**Codes, Categories, and Theme of the Faculty Knowledge Required by the Institution and the One-Year Residency Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent School, Innovative Program, OYR Program has value (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Awareness of the purpose of the OYR Program</td>
<td>Knowledge of the Institution and OYR Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact students in Methodology, Committed to the OYR Program (Faculty 2)</td>
<td>Faculty perception of students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longevity at the institution (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Institutional Memory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The graduates of the program and institution.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remembered when there was an identified staff for the OYR Program (Faculty 3)</td>
<td>Organizational Changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwindling of resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another area where there was agreement amongst all faculty was about the innovativeness of the institution to implement a program geared to support working students who were older, more mature, and needed the OYR option. Everyone agreed
that the school’s response to the needs of working students, by implementing the OYR model for acceptance, access, and the opportunity to acquire, develop, and hone their social work skills was on point (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4). Two faculty members remarked about the value of the OYR Program and summed it up this way: “The OYR Program has value as it provides access to the more mature working student who recognized the need for higher education. The program is rich and valuable because it is where you see the different cultures and diversity of the student body” (Faculty 3). One faculty remarked “of having students who were older, one in their 60s” (Faculty 1). Another faculty referred to the need of the OYR Program and said this;

It is a needed program as it provides access to a group of students who cannot give up their jobs to come to social work school full-time. The OYR students have a wealth of knowledge and real-world experience. (Faculty 4)

While the findings were overwhelmingly positive, the erosion of organizational systems has affected and impacted the program. One faculty who has worked in the institution for over 15 years shared some of the structural, human resources, political, and symbolic issues that have affected the program. The faculty spoke about the structure and the staff at one point assigned to the OYR Program and its students. The faculty recalled having someone identified as the point-person for the OYR student. The faculty and agencies could contact the point-person, and most of all, the students could reach out for support to resolve issues affecting their lived experiences within the program. Like most programs, the faculty pointed out, “they go through trials and tribulations, unwanted changes, changes outside of their control and shift within organizational programs” (Faculty 3). The faculty further stated; “It’s no one’s fault that things change. However,
if there is no attention to the program, then those changes can hurt the program and its participants” (Faculty 3).

Another area where there was agreement about the changes to the program was the fact that adjuncts taught most of the classes in the OYR pathway. While this phenomenon is not new in most academic institutions, all four faculty agreed that this creates a sense on the part of the OYR students, (who were majority students of color) of being less important that full-time students.. The faculty recognized the perception but offered the point of view that “by the nature of being OYR students-having to attend classes in the evenings- that this is part of the process” (Faculty 3).

Commitment to the OYR students. The fourth theme answering the interview question about faculty perceptions of the OYR students was the commitment afforded OYR students. Table 4.18 depicts the codes, categories, and themes related to the perceptions of the faculty.

All four faculty reported positive and critical areas of concern regarding the OYR students. The positive comments ranged from acknowledging their achievements at work, being hard workers, that they wanted to learn, willingness to listen and think, and were responsible students (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4). One faculty said; “without a doubt, they are very much wanting to learn and curious, and could do the coursework” (Faculty 3). Another faculty stated it this way;

There is just some energy that comes from the OYR students that I don't think exists elsewhere in the school. And I like the fact that I may know what's going on in substance abuse or mental health at the current moment. I'm still back in
history, and they bring it into the classroom. So, it's always a very alive and
dynamic exchange. (Faculty 2)

One faculty described the OYR students as humble because they know what they don’t
know. The faculty went on to share that OYR OML students know failure because “in
social innovation, it's suggested to fail fast and fail often, to maximize the educational
value of the failure” (Faculty 1). The faculty member indicated that

Failure is expected and valuable and is important – in social enterprise, which in
my field, we value failure. Entrepreneurs are serial which means they fail a lot.
And sometimes we say, you know, in social innovation, there's this kind of
suggestion – to fail fast and fail often. Because if you fail fast, then you have time
to go back and redo it. If you fail slowly, you may not have that time” (Faculty 4).

Other areas of positive perceptions included the faculty who talked about the
positive energy received because they were open, honest, self-aware, and had a great
sense of humor. The faculty indicated that amid the classroom discussions, because of
the multiple experiences in the room, the ideas were rich, provocative, and thoughtful.
The faculty said this;

The OYR students are resourceful, have real-world knowledge, can manage
multiple priorities simultaneously, a real effort to do what's asked of them
regarding readings and things like that. They seem to take that very seriously even
if they don't always succeed at it, they try. Sense of humor, and flava. There's
something because they are largely people of color and there's just something that
happens when people of color come together that it's hard to explain to other
groups. There's energy; there's a special keeping it real. (Faculty 4)
One faculty stated it this way,

The OYR students are interesting. First, they are surer. But second, they are not as caught up in what do we do, how do we do it? They are sort of like, what do we do with this or that. They want to integrate, I think, better theory and practice.

(Faculty 3)

Table 4.18

*Codes, Categories, and Theme of the Faculty Perceptions about Commitment to Students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They know failure, they are leaders, they are Managers and Directors within their Organizations, they know what they don’t know, they don’t jump to conclusion (Faculty 1)</td>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>Committed to the OYR Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OYR students are more responsible (Faculty 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OYR students struggle with the clinical concepts; their writings are poor (Faculty 3)</td>
<td>OYR students need support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OYR students are more mature; they bring practice issues to the classroom; diverse population, want to learn, willing to explore ideas, the OYR students challenge the assumptions in the classroom, they are creative in their thinking, two-way relationship between faculty and OYR student, Influence growth and development, proud of the students (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Committed to their learning Connects with professors Accepting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two faculty members captured the perception essence when they stated;
I hope that as future social workers, they will not just take this education and decide okay, now I got my MSW but take the information that they're getting and share it with the people who they are working with so that they can then self-empower. I'm hoping that they learn how to create the kind of spaces where people can do that. (Faculty 4)

The other faculty member stated:

There are all kinds of opportunities in, kind of emerging technologies, high technology and other social innovation fields for social workers to be part of those-design teams. We don't usually think of social workers in that way – but some of our students have moved into that, and that's very valuable. There are opportunities outside of traditional social workers, for people who are bold enough to think in creative ways. And we encourage our students to be those people. Because we're a generalist profession. (Faculty 1)

On the other hand, some faculty identified areas of concerns about the OYR students’ need for support to accomplish tasks like understanding the clinical underpinnings affecting service users. For example, one faculty indicated that some OYR students struggle with identifying and integrating the clinical knowledge in the classroom. The faculty attributed this to the type of work conducted at the agency level which often included checking the boxes without any clear understanding of what was happening to a particular family or individual. Although difficult, the faculty did not indicate that the task was insurmountable, only difficult. Another faculty also discussed issues with the OYR students writing abilities. Most OYR students were returning to school after years of absence and were unfamiliar with the APA style of writing and
lacked writing skills. The faculty all indicated that they did refer the students to the writing center and encouraged them to seek assistance from the school’s resources.

*Lacks preparation.* The fifth theme refers to the preparation of the OYR students to enter the residency year known as Time Frame II or field placement year. Table 4.19 depicts the codes, categories, and themes related to the preparation of the OYR students to enter their residency year.

All the faculty agreed that they did not assist in the process of preparing the students for Time Frame II in an official capacity. One faculty was surprised when asked about the preparation of the students to enter Time Frame II and wondered why, as a department, they were not involved in preparing the students for Time Frame II. The faculty was surprised by the response as there was no rationale given as to the lack of their involvement in the process. All faculty mentioned that it was not within their role as instructors to assist in the preparation of the students for Time Frame II and mentioned the field education department as the group responsible for this undertaking.

Two faculty members mentioned that informally the practice lab course prepares the students for their residency year, in that the class bridges theory and practice. However, as they too thought about the question they admitted not knowing the process or what it entailed. None of the faculty participated in the process of preparing the students for Time Frame II, yet this was a critical area for the OYR students as they prepared to live the dual role experience of student and employee.
Table 4.19

*Codes, Categories, and Theme of Faculty Perceptions about the Academic Institution’s Preparation of the OYR Students to Participate in their Residency Year-Time Frame II*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty is not aware of the process leading to the residency year (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Educate faculty</td>
<td>Lacks Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty does not see preparation as their role (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Silos-Classroom Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OYR students need support from the school at field placement (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Recognition of support needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledges problems</td>
<td>Bridging of Theory and Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of consistency in knowing if agencies honor field experience agreement (Faculty 1, 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Lab, Method classes (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Structural issues.* Challenges exist within any institution. The sixth theme addresses the challenges within the OYR Program and outlines the codes, categories, and themes in Table 4.20. All four faculty underscored the complexities of the social work profession, given the factors affecting students’ ability to succeed. The three areas creating challenges for the OYR students are the changes in the profession, organizations, and academic institution.

One unintended consequence of managed care on the social work profession is the increase in perception that social work primary role is to provide individual therapy to service users. The clinical focus of the profession creates challenges because the profession has become more of a specialist than a generalist profession. As such the non-clinical OYR students were experiencing more difficulties in securing field placements.
that represents their choice of methods within the school. One, faculty stated “I'm very critical of social work moving towards becoming a specialist profession, which it has, in its overwhelming adoption of clinical social work” (Faculty 1).

“Clinical social work is a specialist area, and it works against the foundations of social work as a generalist profession. And, it disadvantages us to be able to compete for positions that are generalist training would allow us to compete for in the future” (Faculty 4). This answer speaks directly to the issues of the macro/micro divide plaguing the profession and most academic institutions. The issue of moving to a specialist practice profession also has repercussions for the agencies who are employers to the OYR students.

The faculty recognized that issues were affecting the agencies in creating field placement opportunities and finding qualified field instructors to support the students. The lack of resources contributed to the stress level of the OYR students as not having the needed support jeopardized their opportunity to complete the program.

The agencies were also feeling the effects of not having enough resources. Although the agencies signed the agreement form at the onset of the students’ application, at times they lost staff due to attrition, they lost financial resources and were asked to do more with less. When it came time for them to honor the agreement, they experienced difficulties. One faculty summed it up this way;

I think that the agencies are feeling overwhelmed and everything else, but I think if they could be helped to see it differently – that it's a benefit to them. Investing in the OYR students is worth it because you'll also probably keep people who ordinarily would not stay. (Faculty 2)
Table 4.20

*Codes, Categories, and Theme of Faculty Perceptions of the Challenges Within the OYR Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complexities of the social work profession (Faculty 1, 3)</td>
<td>External Factors</td>
<td>Structural Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging the Micro and Macro divide, moving from a generalist to a specialist focus, agencies struggling to meet the demands of field placement (Faculty 1)</td>
<td>Changes to the Profession</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struggles with the classroom work, adjusting to classes, dual roles</td>
<td>Time Management Strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges of being an OYR student become part of the OYR educational experience</td>
<td>Access to learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited access to learning opportunities, courses, subjects, professors due to scheduling realities of the OYR students (Faculty 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty must help OYR students with transitions and respond to their specific needs (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Erase Silos’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The inability of the employer to keep qualified staff affects service users negatively. The staff person attending the academy relies on the support of the agency to minimize the stress of being in school. The agency can provide support by honoring the signed agreement. One faculty shared that when there is staff turnover at the agency, it can have a negative impact on the OYR student. The faculty said this:

”The OYR students are working, they have a family. A lot is going on. And then when they get to the residency year, that agreement form is not acknowledged in
the same way. If they are supposed to have three cases set aside for them, in a different program, the new director of that program may not even know that, because of miscommunication (Faculty 3)

The faculty also added, “Although they sign the agency agreement form, things happen. There is a new director. The agency is going through a transition. There is funding, I mean, there are so many organizational dynamics that can happen” (Faculty 3).

The communication also affects the academic institution, as not having the appropriate field placement opportunity may interrupt the OYR student’s ability to engage in the learning process or continue school. One faculty described the pitfall of the OYR student not having the appropriate assigned cases and how this invariably affects the learning. The faculty shared that when students have not received current cases which was a part of their field requirement, it forced the worker to conduct assessments reflectively instead of doing it in the here and now of the learning experience (Faculty 3). The faculty warned of ethical inappropriateness, and as such, the academic institution has a role and responsibility to address the challenges of each student. All faculty agreed that the institution needed to develop a system to ensure compliance with the agency agreement document early to address issues such as role transition, classroom responsibilities, and field placement issues. The faculty also acknowledged the importance of erasing the silos and taking an active role in preparing the students for the residency year. One faculty said, “I wouldn't even know who to go to,” another said, “I never thought about it, but I will now.”

**Student readiness.** The third research question explored the students’ perceptions of readiness to take and pass the state License Master’s Social Work Exam (LMSW) and
enter the social work profession. Table 4.21 depicts the interview questions supporting the exploration of the OYR student perspective about the preparation and expectation of themselves to take and pass the state licensure and become licensed master’s social workers. The researcher identified three themes for the readers. The themes are (a) lacks preparation, (b) awareness and expectations, and (c) attaining legitimization. Table 4.19 outlines the codes, categories, and themes from the students’ perception on whether the institution prepared them to take the license masters’ social work exam.

Table 4.21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Research Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How has the OYR Program prepared you to take the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?</td>
<td>What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state License Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How would you describe your expectations regarding your ability to pass the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lacks preparation for licensure exam. Preparing students to take the state licensure exam is critical as it has far-reaching implications for social work academic institutions. Academic institutions are rated annually on the percentage of their students who take and are successful in taking the license exams. Table 4.22 indicates the codes, categories, and themes relating to the student’s perception about preparation to take the licensure exam.
Of the eight students in the focus groups, one student indicated being prepared as the student is now licensed. Three used terminologies such as not prepared, partially prepared, and inadequately prepared to describe their perception of readiness to take the licensure exam. Three students in Time Frame I indicated that they are not ready to think about or participate in licensure readiness yet because they were first-year students.

Two students graduated and had different answers to the question of preparation. One student took and passed the test upon graduation and stated that:

Well yes, I graduated so. Therefore, I must know something. If you attended a social work institution and graduated, you are somewhat prepared to take the test. However, you must study. Not because you finished the coursework mean that you can go in and take the test. You were attending school for 2.5 years, so the coursework and fieldwork enables you to take the test. But as I say you must study. (Student 1)

There was disagreement on the premise that since you graduated you were ready to take the test. In another group, the other student who graduated said this:

My answer is yes and no to that. I think there is part of it where it fell a little short but overall just yeah. Names, I can recall the name but maybe don't know things as fully. Well into memory. (Student 3)

While the students agreed that the license test preparation was a step in the right direction, their concerns included the delay in providing information about licensure, about the process, and integrating the conversation throughout the 2 ½ years within the program. A student remarked that outside the institution test preparation was a hot topic
as everyone knew its importance in the field of social work. Inside the institution, the lack of information, integration, and preparation came up in all three focus groups.

Although the student graduated and was licensed, the student said this:

The school waits too long to provide information on the licensure exam, preparation, and steps to take the exam. There is information on blackboard, but the free LMSW test prep does not occur until after graduation both in the spring and winter. There are no elective courses on test prep. The National Association of Social Work (NASW) offers the test preparation, and there are other boot camps. (Student 1)

Table 4.22

*Codes, Categories, and Theme of the Students’ Perception Regarding Preparation to Take and Pass the LMSW Exam*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Because of program completion I was prepared (Student 1)</td>
<td>Test Preparation</td>
<td>Lacks Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school did not prepare me, partially prepared me, or inadequately prepare (Student 3, 4, 6, 7)</td>
<td>Curriculum &amp; School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice question’s in HB do not adequately stimulate the real license exam questions (Student 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License exam prep should be a course (Student 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-clinical student concern as the license exam is heavily clinical (Student 6)</td>
<td>Student Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School took too long to share information on the LMSW test process (Student 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need more experience taking practice license exams (Student 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would prefer to use Apgar questions rather than Hutchinson (Student 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compartmentalization- (Student 2, 4, 5, 6, &amp; 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Across all three focus groups, there was a consensus as the students expressed concerns that the human behavior (HB) courses did not adequately provide opportunities
to practice and simulate questions designed similarly to those on the licensure exam. The students stated that the LMSW practice test questions did not resemble the questions on the human behavior courses within the school. In focus group two, the students agreed with each other concerning the test questions from HB courses 1, 2, or 3, and that the tests did not help prepare them for the LMSW exam. They agreed that the HB exams helped by simulating the test as related to the hours and number of questions, but it was not quite the same (Student 3, 4, & 5). “The framing of the questions differ,” said one student (Student 4). One student remarked; “the questions did prep me to take an exam like dealing with testing anxiety but not with the content of the test” (Student 3).

Test anxiety was also brought up in another focus group as a concern for OYR students. One student stated it this way:

Exams make me so nervous. It's the whole anxiety of sitting there in front of this computer taking this test, and then everyone walking out and that's what kills me. I must put on blinders on literally not look around, so I can stay focused and not worry about who is getting up, finished and how they did it that quickly, because does that mean ... am I too slow? Are they too fast?” (Student 8)

Another area where the idea of integrating the LMSW test preparation course received consensus was during the conversation about the non-clinical students who were not taught or adequately prepared for the licensure exam. While taking courses in the academic institutions, the OYR students, regardless of their method, need to prepare for the LMSW exam. As employees, some students work as direct practice workers, administrators, or community organizers where the level of interaction with, or on behalf of service users differ, and their understanding of direct practice work is challenged.
At work, OYR students are not social workers and as such, they are not familiar with the intricacies of social work practice as they are often compiling and completing documents, linking clients to employment and medical resources, ensuring that service users are compliant with obtaining housing, going to workshops, family court or visiting their children in foster care. OYR students must navigate between school and work consistently and as such the LMSW test preparation is crucial. One student explained the importance of bridging school and work as it related to the LMSW test preparation this way:

Our actual jobs don't help answer those questions in the practice of social work and then, the fact that, the classroom work that we do here doesn't help you answer those questions. It's the prep courses that help you answer those questions because they tell you how to take the test. Which is a different skill? Test taking is a different skill, (Student 3)

The student added:

My work experience makes it worse because reflecting on the work from my job makes it worse. I'm more prone to picking the wrong answer. The reason why I say that also is the test does not ever want you to pick a choice that tells you to defer to your supervisor unless it is for transference or countertransference issues. (Student 3)

A non-clinical student summed it up this way,

I'm community organizing, and so this test is for clinicians, made for clinicians, but I know that I need it to be a legitimate social worker, right? And that's hard
for me. I graduated with an MSW, and I did all this work, people are still going to be like, "Well, where's that L?" So I've got to take this test. (Student 6)

A student agreed and stated that “If you don't have credentials, don't nobody want to hear nothing from you. Who you?” (Student 7). Another student agreed and said, “It’s something that you have to take and something that you need to take because otherwise why did you go to social work school for?” (Student 8).

**Self-assessment, awareness, and expectation.** The second theme relating to student’s perception about their preparedness to take and pass the LMSW test focused on self-knowledge, test readiness, and understanding of the requisites of becoming a social worker with the ability to practice under the social work title upon graduation. Table 4.23 depicts the codes, categories, and themes of the OYR students’ perception of readiness to take and pass the LMSW exam.

The OYR students were aware of the importance of licensure as they were often times navigating and problem-solving within their agencies to identify licensed social workers to provide their supervision, or “they are denied job opportunities despite years of experience because they are not credentialed” (Student 7). Two OYR students remarked that they were passed over for job promotions despite having 12 and 6 years respectively of on-the-job experiences, due to the fact that they did not have the master’s degree in social work (MSW), or the ability to become licensed. Further, all the students indicated knowing colleagues who had their L and who took the test as recently as 2 years before. A student shared that “talking to the therapists at my agency and how some of them had to take it, some of them took it about 2 years ago” (Student 8). Because of this
knowledge, all the OYR students, with the exception of the one who had passed the exam already, expressed the desire to take and pass the LMSW exam at the time of qualifying.

The OYR students knew firsthand, by nature of working in the field, how critical the licensure exam was to legitimization, job security, promotion, and attainment. The OYR students recognized that there was no value in having the MSW if you could not pass the LMSW exam. In today’s social work environment licensure attainment is vital and has far-reaching implications for every social work student, regardless of method. The intensity of one student concern rippled within the focus group when the conversation shifted to questioning the choice of method. The student said this: “was I prepared to do all the community organizing planning and program development stuff for this test?” (Student 6). The challenges of the micro-macro divide affecting academic institutions as it relates to licensure and test preparation because to practice in the title of a social worker you must become licensed remain critical.

Of further interest is the compartmentalization of the students focus and readiness to take the test. While some students mentioned not being able to think about the test at the time of the study, all seven knew that they planned on taking the test at some point in the near future. The three Time Frame I students indicated that because they were getting ready for Time Frame II and needed to concentrate on their placement issues, they could not think about the exam at the time of the study. The three Time Frame III students indicated that they had begun the studying process, one identified having registered for the free test preparation scheduled for later summer, while one took it earlier in the summer. The other graduate also took the test preparation course and had started a study group to take the test in early fall.
Table 4.23

**Codes, Categories, and Theme from the Students’ Perspective of their Expectations to Take and Pass the LMSW Exam and Enter the Social Work Profession**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The MSW degree is of limited value without passing the licensing exam (Student 7)</td>
<td>Licensure Readiness</td>
<td>Self-Assessment, Awareness and Expectation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSW and LMSW involve a lot of jumping through hoops; convinced it is worthwhile, but there is some resentment at times (Student 6)</td>
<td>Conflicts</td>
<td>Legitimization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern as the license exam is heavily clinical (Student 6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compartmentalization of their lives cannot think about it now (Student 1, 5, &amp; 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goal is to pass the license exam the first time; Will pass the licensure exam (Students 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 &amp; 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did so already (Student 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated previously, one of the eight students was already a licensed social worker as the student took the exam in another state. The student shared with the group that in the other states, students did not have to wait until graduation to take the test, they could take it in their final semester of graduate school. The option was available, and students who wanted to were encouraged to take advantage of the offer.

Self-assessment becomes critical should the student decide to go this route as the initial cost, although lower than New York State cost, involves an additional fee incurred to transfer the result because the test was in another jurisdiction. The out of state information was helpful to the three Time Frame I students who were not aware of the
option to take the test before program completion. One of the students repeatedly said thanks to the group and then declared “let me, write this down” (Student 2).

**Faculty perceptions – student readiness.** The third research question with the faculty explored their perceptions of the readiness of the students to take and pass the state License Master’s Social Work Exam (LMSW) and enter the social work profession. Table 4.24 depicts the interview questions supporting the exploration of the faculty’s perception about the preparation and expectation of students to take and pass the state licensure and become licensed master’s social workers.

**Table 4.24**

*Summary of the Alignment between Research Question 3 and the Interview Questions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Research Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How has the OYR Program prepared the students to take the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?</td>
<td>What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state License Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How would you describe your expectations regarding the students’ ability to pass the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To your knowledge, how successful have the OYR Program graduates regarding entering and working within the social work field?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher identified two themes for the readers. The themes are (a) systems affecting preparation, and (b) connecting the systems and becoming colleagues. Table 4.25 depicts the codes, categories, and theme systemically from the faculty perceptions about the students’ readiness to take the licensure exam. The faculty emphasized a system approach in how they viewed student preparedness to take the state licensure
exam. The system included the view from the academic institution, work environment, curriculum design, and student’s behavior. Utilizing a systematic approach in exploring issues and concerns provides a clear vision of what was lacking or how each system has impacted or affected the whole.

**The academic environment.** All four faculty had varying responses as they remarked on the role of the academic institution in its preparation of the student. Three of the four faculty members used terms such as *inadequately* and *partially prepared* (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4), and one expanded further and stated that there was no evidence that the messaging on the importance of licensing reached the OYR students (Faculty 2). The same faculty also indicated that for those students who were living with an ability, there was no indication that the conversations included the students, who must navigate and request special assistance to take the exam. The faculty said the “School should ensure that students are informed about license exam accommodations” (Faculty 2). Of the four faculty, one mentioned that because the students completed the program, they were adequately prepared to take the licensure exam. The faculty summed it up this way:

Well, I would imagine that they have every opportunity, like the other students, to take the prep courses. I don't know that they need anything extra. I mean, if they've been coming to class, you are being exposed to the same content, they finished just like everybody else, and then just like everybody else they get folded into the prep course. (Faculty 3)

**Curriculum.** The faculty agreed that including test preparation in the school for the students upon graduation was a step in the right direction. However, three of the four faculty indicated that the curriculum did not sufficiently prepare the students to take the
licensure exam. The faculty focused on two areas of the curriculum – the implementation and use of two courses and the lack of using specific language within the classes that aligned with terminology that was used on the licensure exam.

Table 4.25

*Codes, Categories, and Theme of Faculty Perceptions of the Academic Institution’s Preparation of the Students to Take and Pass the LMSW Exam*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequately prepared, partially prepared, lacks messaging on the Importance of licensure within the school (Faculty 2, 3) Accessibility to test preparation within the institution (Faculty 3)</td>
<td>Academic Environment</td>
<td>Systems Affecting Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited exposure to direct practice work in the institution (Faculty 1) Bridging levels of organizational roles which necessitates licensure (Faculty 1) Implementing specialized course work and Practice Lab (Faculty 1, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Organizational Environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disconnect with the language within the school and what is on the licensure exam. Room for improvement in the syllabi (Faculty 4) OYR students are prepared by nature of program completion (Faculty 3)</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OYR students lacks focus initially, maybe too busy, (Faculty 2, 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students Behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two courses the three faculty members mentioned were the direct practice course for those students who were non-clinical students and the practice course that all students take regardless of their methods.

One faculty indicated that the implementation of the non-clinical course allowed the students to begin to examine and explore the clinical information outlined in the
Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) about the duration, severity, and frequency of significant disorders. It is critical for students to understand these before diagnosing service users. The faculty summed it up this way:

The course goes through using the DSM since that's on the exam, which deals with the issues that a manager might have to deal with that are clinically related. So, it's not how you know, how you establish a relationship with clients or how you avoid certain things, it's an organizational decision level to know how to avoid dangerous situations that begin as clinical issues, and how do you work with programs and staff to avoid that kind of thing? (Faculty 1)

This assessment is critical as the non-clinical students are often supervisors and managers and they must understand the intricacies of clinical issues affecting service users and staff who are providing the services.

The provision of service is important in the social services arena. Because of this phenomenon, two faculty emphasized the course in which practice meets theory within the curriculum. The faculty both recognized though, that although all students are in this class, the language used throughout the course is not often synchronized or aligned with the sections on the exam. The faculty indicated that there were some faculty, including themselves, who were not familiar with the language on the exam as not every faculty had taken the exam in the newer format. They were “grandfathered” in as licensed master or licensed clinical social workers given their prior histories (Faculty 2 and 4). One of the faculty summed it up this way in recalling the exam:

That was a long time ago, so I remember nothing. I remember the number 2 pencils. Still, remember sitting in the institute for hours, and now they go in, do it
on a computer, finish, and they get their grade right away. We had to wait 3
months. Oh God, I'm aging myself. (Faculty 4)

Both faculty discussed the importance of updating the syllabi to encourage the faculty who were teaching the practice course to identify the language and link it to the subsection areas of the exam (Faculty 3, 4). One of the faculty referred to the question of preparedness as a “good question” (Faculty 4). The faculty stated,

We have to work even more at tightening that up, and this coming year, there's already a plan in the works to sit down with another faculty soon because we will infuse some of the licensing stuff through the practice course. So hopefully this year will be better. (Faculty 4)

**Organizational environment.** The OYR students remain working while employed, and the faculty mentioned the organization's responsibility in preparing their employees to take the license social work exam, as it relates to the students’ work roles. Two of the four faculty members made references to how social work licensure is affecting the work environment. One faculty shared that the work environment is the place where social work practice occurs, and as such, there are certain staff roles within the organizations that require a social work license (Faculty 1). The organizations are aware of licensure laws that affect their staffing and delivery of services. Involvement in licensure preparation is critical as they have made commitments to their staff who are pursuing their master’s in social work and are working toward licensure. The preparation includes ensuring that the OYR student has an appropriate field placement and that there is a qualified field instructor to conduct supervision. One faculty referenced the lack of
support in identifying clients for OYR students, making it impossible for them to actively engage in the discussion in the clinical practice course (Faculty 3).

Another area where licensure preparation is critical and needs attention is when it comes time for organizations to transition the OYR graduates to higher positions. Because of the importance of licensure within social work, after a time, staff cannot operate under the social worker title if they are not licensed. While the opportunity exists to offer recent graduates conditional hire, there is a time frame attached to this, or as one faculty indicated, an organization may not hire them at all because of the nature of the institution and the law. The faculty stated, “it is a fact that hospitals will not hire social work staff if they are not licensed” (Faculty 3).

**Student involvement and responsibility.** “If graduating OYR students do not meet the professional standard to practice in the social work field, then their acquisition of the master’s degree in social work would be for naught” (Faculty 3). All four faculty members recognized this issue and expressed concerns about the role the students must play in preparing themselves to take the licensure exam, despite their many roles, responsibilities, and time constraints. One of the four faculty members indicated that there was a concern whether the OYR students would take advantage of the test preparation courses offered by the institution (Faculty 3). Another wondered whether the students, with their multiple responsibilities, would have the time to participate in the test preparation courses, formulate groups with colleagues to participate in test preparation, or identify other community resources in which to gain additional resources (Faculty 2).

**Connecting the systems and becoming colleagues.** The final theme utilized to express the perceptions of the faculty regarding the OYR students’ ability to take and
pass the licensure exam and become social workers is the connections needed within the systems and the students ultimately becoming colleagues. Table 4.26 outlines the codes, categories, and themes.

Table 4.26

*Codes, Categories, and Theme of Faculty Perceptions of the OYR Students’ Success Upon Entering the Social Work Profession*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely successful, Licensed social workers (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>High Success Rate</td>
<td>Connecting the Systems Become Colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes new positions and role, political candidates, emerging technologies, (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4)</td>
<td>Higher Managerial Positions, Political Office, New endeavors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return to school seeking their doctorates (Faculty 4) Strategic and purposeful about their decisions (Faculty 1) Some remain in positions out of fear (Faculty 3) Difference between “agency work” and “social work” (Faculty 4)</td>
<td>Pursue Higher Education</td>
<td>Remain or Stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integration of the profession</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All faculty indicated that by nature of attending the institution, studying, completing the work requirement, graduating, and participating in the licensure test preparation course, the OYR students could take and pass the licensure exam and ultimately become colleagues. One faculty summed it up this way:

If the OYR student’s hunger for knowledge is as strong as it shows up in the practice course then I would imagine they're gaining something from those classes.
(human behavior, policy) that should help them have a pretty solid edge on the licensing exam (Faculty 4).

The dataset showed that faculty indicated that they were aware that some OYR students take and pass the test on the first try while others indicated that they might delay the process given time constraints, not feeling ready, and cost. A faculty said,

I think it's a confident group, so, I don't think its fear of not passing. I'm sure that may be true for some, but it's another expense. And, not only of money but of time to prep for it. And I think they're making a cost-benefit decision of whether they need it or not, or whether it's worth the cost. (Faculty 1)

No faculty reported that not taking the exam was an option for the OYR students. One of the faculty said; “I encourage them to take it and pass it. And every OML student who has taken it has passed it – 99%, the first time they've taken it. But not everybody's taken it” (Faculty 1). Another faculty indicated that every OYR student should take the licensure exam regardless of method and their politics, as it is a positive outcome to their studies and practice (Faculty 3).

There is support throughout the data which revealed the faculty’s belief that the OYR students should take the licensure exam and that none should be discouraged from preparing for and taking the exam. One faculty warned that no one should ever suggest to any OYR student that they cannot take or pass the licensure exam as that message is dangerous. The faculty said,

There is cause for concern if there are any messages out there suggesting to OYR students from a demographic that they cannot pass the license exam. Messages suggesting to OYR students that they cannot pass the license exam could be
potentially, politically dangerous, as well as detrimental to students by becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. (Faculty 3)

All the faculty indicated that the OYR students were extremely successful and have become licensed social workers, changed career paths and returned to school (Faculty 1, 2, 3, 4). Still, others indicated that the OYR students decided their next steps strategically, whether they remained at their place of employment or sought alternative employment (Faculty 1, 2, 3). One faculty indicated that OYR students go on to graduate schools to obtain their PhDs and as such, was recently asked to complete two letters of recommendation. The faculty agreed that the OYR students, upon program completion, have learned how to differentiate and manage the task of practicing as a social worker with a very different focus and purpose than before program acceptance.

**Summary of the Qualitative Findings**

The study used a qualitative design with a phenomenological approach whose purpose was to explore the perceptions of the students and faculty about the One Year residency program. The phenomenological approach afforded the researcher the opportunity to conduct the study in the participants’ natural settings, hear their voices, and capture the essence of their experiences using three focus groups and four individual interviews as the data corpus. Using the inductive approach, the researcher focused on the data set separately and identified patterns and themes from the rich, thick, descriptions of the students and faculty. By coding and winnowing the data, the researcher did the following to answer the three research questions:

1. Used three subcategories to identify 20 themes of the students’ perceptions about the OYR Program for the readers (research question 1).
2. Identified six themes from the faculty’s perceptions about the OYR students (research question 2)

3. Identified five themes from the students’ and faculty’s perspectives about readiness to take the licensure exam and enter the profession as licensed social workers (research question 3).

A descriptive approach assisted the researcher in understanding the insights, perceptions, feelings, and thoughts of the study participants. Using semi-structured interviews in the focus groups and individual interviews, the researcher collected data by listening, observing, writing, audio taping and reading transcriptions of the note taken during the interviews. The researcher processed the data through sorting and classifying and used open, axial, and selective coding to generate categories, codes, and themes from the rich, thick data of the students and faculty's perceptions.

As a result, the researcher identified the themes which were in step with answering the three research questions. The findings supported the perceptions of the student and faculty and provided insight into their lived experiences of the One Year Residency Program. The codes and themes fully represented the students' or faculty's perceptions of the program from their perspectives. As it relates to the students, the researcher identified the themes using the One Year Residency model of Time Frames I, II and III. Time Frame I is for students in the first year of the program, Time Frame II represents students in the second year of the program, but it represents the multiple roles of the OYR student (classroom, field placement, and employee) and Time Frame III, the final semester of the students mimics the first year of class time and working.
**Student findings.** The researcher identified 35 themes placed in two subcategories – before acceptance, and experience after acceptance, to represent the findings in research question 1. The subcategory of before acceptance findings revealed that the students all reported receiving positive feedback from colleagues as they explored attending the academic institution. The eight themes supporting the findings from the students’ perceptions of the OYR Program included the affordability, the intuition’s reputation, accessibility, social justice platform, innovation, historical legacy, community involvement, and professional growth. The findings suggested that the institution has a positive reputation and offers a significant service for the employed social services student. Although these positive overtures were significant from the students’ perspectives before enrollment, once accepted and beginning the program, the positive feelings and descriptors changed over time.

At the beginning of the program (Time Frame I), the students reported a mixture of positive and negative feelings about the institution. During Time Frame I, the students indicated that they felt connected to the program, loved the 1-year long practice class, loved the diversity of the program, the flexibility of the professors, and felt that they accomplished and learned a lot. There was a change in perception in one of the group’s interchanges; a student recognized that applying too narrow of a lens to the perception of flexibility can diminish its intentions.

The findings changed as the students reported that the lack of information during the transition from Time Frame I to II was problematic. Time Frame II begins the residential year or field placement year, which is a critical and intense time for OYR students. The findings showed that OYR students require creativity, organizational skills,
time management, and a commitment to problem solve the issues faced during Time Frame II. The lack of preparation for Time Frame II was problematic and affected the students’ lived experiences by causing undue stress, feelings of being overwhelmed, and being alone. The burden of unraveling and fixing the problems remained the responsibility of the OYR students.

The students agreed that the lack of preparation affects both the school and agency environment. The delays contributed to a lack of information which if resolved early on, could have avoided numerous issues. The issues involved ensuring that the agencies had their systems in place to address the needs of the student’s placements. These issues also included ensuring that the appropriate field placement assignment existed, that a qualified social worker was in place to provide supervision, and that the assigned tasks were in tandem with the school’s field educational requirement.

Where there were issues in securing the field placement assignment, the burden was on the OYR students to resolve the issue. The OYR students had to self-advocate within their place of employment to secure field assignments, either internally or in other program areas, without support from the institution. The OYR students learned the importance of being politically correct and not making waves, in order to secure their field placements. The findings indicated that the OYR students were expected to meet the demands of the work requirement of their agencies, fieldwork, and coursework with limited support from the school.

Because the OYR students recognized the value of returning to school to obtain their master’s in social work degrees, they had to make sacrifices to manage the requirements their organizations and the academic institution. The OYR students had to
maintain their work schedules, determine a time to meet the demands of field placement, and at times, travel to other boroughs to secure supervision. Further, the new learning of bridging theory and practice was overwhelming as they felt stress due to ineffective supervision in the method area of concentration, overwhelmed by the lack of structure about the number of process recordings or logs. And at times, they questioned the perceptions of ethical behaviors within the organizations. The findings also suggested that the OYR students and program schedules contributed to limited access for learning opportunities, courses, and specialized subjects with tenured professors. Labels like being the stepchild, the lowering of standards, and lower standard of education represented the perceptions of the OYR students.

On the other hand, although the findings outlined significant issues during Time Frame II and III, for those students who graduated the findings were once again positive. The graduated OYR students acknowledged the issues raised but focused on the rigorous nature of the program in spite of some limitations, feelings of accomplishment, preparing to take the licensure exam, taking and passing the licensure exam, and looking forward to the next chapter. The findings included themes of commitment, acceptance, cannot do it alone, faculty support, and dedication.

The OYR students acknowledged that the test preparation implemented within the academic institution does not go far enough. The students reported being appreciative of the test preparation but feeling that there is a lack of and delay with the information about test preparation. The findings revealed that one of the graduating students became licensed before graduation. Through collegiate support, they studied, created resources, shared information, and took the test in another state. This finding supported the
camaraderie of the OYR student group as a cohort because they found ways to support each other, to self-assess their readiness to do the next thing, and become legitimate social workers. These findings were exemplified in one of the focus group meetings when the Time Frame I student took notes and expressed appreciation of the information. The OYR students were self-aware, and they had expectations of taking the licensure exam and becoming qualified social workers.

The findings supported the notion that OYR students become successful post-graduation and make decisions to remain in their place of employment, attain higher positions, seek alternative employment, and return to school to complete their doctoral studies, and become colleagues. The findings also suggested that the students recognized the importance of licensure because they were employed in the social services field and were aware of the rules affecting hiring new graduates and those who were working in communities without licensure.

**Faculty findings.** The findings from the faculty’s perspectives included endorsement of the OYR model, understanding the accreditation process and its inclusion of the OYR model, knowledge of the institution and the OYR Program, and their perceptions of the Time Frame II process. Their findings aligned with the findings of the students.

The faculty chose to work and teach in the academic institution and the OYR Program. Because of the institution's rich history, standings in the social work community, and commitment to the profession, the faculty were prideful about their choices and the notion of how they wanted to affect and impact social workers in training to meet the demands of society. The findings were positive and reflected a commitment
to legacy as two of the faculty interviewed were alumni. The faculty used different lens to describe their perceptions about the OYR Program, they all recognized the reduction in resources, changes, and the need for improvement in the program. The findings included the recognition that in some areas the curriculum lacked rigor and they were open to embracing the changes they must implement. The findings reflect the need for a systematic approach to problem-solving. The systemic changes include assessing the areas of the curriculum that needs refining, planning on exploring what language needs infusing in the practice course, updating the syllabi to ensure compliance, and updating the human capital needed to address the concerns of the program.

Of significance is the finding that the faculty also identified Time Frame II as the most problematic time post-enrollment within the institution. The findings from the faculty interviews supported the issues identified in the student focus groups about the preparation to transition to Time Frame II. The faculty endorsed the OYR Program, indicated wanting and choosing to work and teach in the school, but recognizing that they do not play a role in the process of transitioning or supporting the OYR students transition to or during Time Frame II.

The findings indicated that the issues experienced by the students in Time Frame II also affected the classroom experience, as at times, the lack of appropriate cases in field placement affected student learning in the clinical classes. In addition to the effect on classroom learning, the lack of assignments prevents students from having the opportunity to learn the skills through practice. Of importance is that the need for advocacy on behalf of the student. This advocacy is omitted as the faculty does not
remedy any issues that arise between the school and the agency, it is left to the OYR student to fix.

As it relates to the perception of readiness to take the licensure exam and enter the profession as social workers, the study participants agreed that the OYR students have the potential to take and pass the licensure exam, despite the findings that the school does not completely prepare the students for the licensure exam. There was some agreement that by nature of completing the program, the students are prepared to take the licensure exam, but the faculty also agreed that additional supports need to be in place to prepare for the state licensure. For example, the findings suggested that due to students’ schedules, additional responsibilities, and the cost of the test, OYR students may not participate in test preparation, or they may delay taking the exam. The findings suggested that OYR students were strategic in their rationale and decisions as to why they were delaying the process. If they were not delaying the process, then they would make every effort to prepare and take the exam.

**Research questions.** Regarding answering research question 1, concerning the students' perception of the OYR Program, they felt that the tuition was affordable, the institution had a good reputation, used a social justice lens, exhibited innovativeness in establishing the One Year Residency Program for working individuals, that it was appealing, and necessary. Finally, all the students felt that accessibility was a great benefit for employed students. Once the students were accepted, they continued to applaud the OYR Program. The findings supported the OYR students' perceptions of being excited to have the opportunity to pursue their educational goals; they had an excellent first year as the professors were knowledgeable, flexible, and helpful. The
OYR students had comradery as they had similar stories, they supported each other, and shared their work experiences. The OYR students acknowledge the level of diversity within the program, as most of the students are people of color. Before entering and upon entering the institution the OYR students' positivity towards the OYR Program was remarkable. The changes in their perceptions occurred as they entered their second year to Time Frame II.

The OYR Students stated that they lacked preparation from both the academic institution and their places of employment because they were not aware of the process. The academic institution waited too long to review the signed agency agreements. There were problems within their organizations that caused field placement disruptions (staff turnover, non-licensed social workers, traveling time of students to secure supervision). No one advocated on their behalf concerning field placement issues. Lack of access to professors, a predominance of adjuncts, a lower standard of education, and unavailability of staff were all discussed. They assumed the responsibility of fixing all the issues relating to a field placement; they were tired, exhausted and burned out. The students felt that the last semester was also exhaustive as five of the eight students expressed concerns about the intensity of the curriculum in Time Frame II and III. All students had concerns about the lack of tenured faculty teaching in the OYR Program.

Five students indicated that after working all day and coming to class, they felt exhausted from the work related to the field placement, their current class schedule and condensed courses. Two program graduates indicated that they were committed to their educational journey, the program was rigorous despite some of the limitations, and they would not have done it any other way. They also felt that they could not have done it
alone, the faculty support was evident, and the adjuncts were flexible, supportive and dedicated.

Regarding research question 2, the faculty perceptions included being recruited, wanting to give back to the OYR Program, wanting to work with students employed in the field of social work, and making a choice to teach in the program. They were knowledgeable about the OYR Program, knew about the accreditation process, and understood the innovative stance of the academic institution. They all agreed with the students’ perceptions that the school did not prepare the OYR students for the second year or Time Frame II. They felt that the conversation might begin in one class, but it was not continuous across all classes. They also indicated that their roles do not extend outside of the classroom, and they were not included in the process to engage the students. The faculty also indicated that with the reduction in the resources for the OYR Program over the years (human and financial, mostly adjuncts teaching in the program, and unavailability of staff in the evenings) has negatively affected the program and its users.

In answering research question 3, five students identified the need for preparation to take and pass the social work licensure exam and become professional social workers. Of the five, four indicated that they were not prepared to take the social work licensure exam. One student wondered about the preparation for non-clinical students. Others stated that the institution waited too long to provide information, the courses did not include the language that was on the exam, and the institution should include a class on test preparation. One student who graduated disagreed and stated that by nature of program completion and passing the test, preparation was adequate. All agreed that the
students needed to be aware of the exams and other supports and self-assess as to their readiness as they are the ones who need to pass the exam.

From the faculty perspectives in answering research question 3, their perceptions considered the academic institution, organizations’ and students’ lenses. From the academic institution perspective, the faculty, although they agreed that students who completed the program were prepared to take the social work licensure exam, three of the four faculty members indicated that on some level the academic institution failed to prepare OYR students. They cited issues such as the inclusion of exam language throughout the curriculum, sharing the information early on in the program about taking the exam, linking the mission and vision of the school to the exam, and bridging the macro-micro divide in preparing all students for the exam.

From the employer/organizations, the faculty felt that most students were not getting exposure within the workplace relating to licensure expectation. Some of the OYR students' roles within the organizations did not focus on licensure attainment due to the challenges of working in organizations exempt from licensure regulations (child welfare, homeless services).

The faculty felt that the school prepared the OYR students by nature of program completion; however, because they were so busy, they initially lacked focus and tended to compartmentalize their lives. Additionally, they stated that OYR students were extremely successful, they take the licensure exam and usually pass it on the first try. The students are strategic in their decision to stay or leave their organizations, they engage politically in the environment, they continue their education, and they integrate the
practice of social work versus agency work. One faculty cautioned that at times, OYR students remained in their positions due to fear.
Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

With the increase in employed individuals returning to school, academic institutions have responded to their needs by implementing programs such as the One Year Residency Program model to provide access and opportunity to attain a social work degree without giving up their jobs (Haffey & Starr, 1988; Miller et al., 2015; Salmon & Walker, 1982). Since the OYR Program model inception over 47 years ago, only one study conducted by Starr and Walker (1982) did a comparative study of the part-time and full-time degree students. The findings showed that there was no difference in preparation of the student groups but showed that the structure and organization of part-time programs often limit student access to full-time faculty, library resources, professional socialization activities, and traditional fieldwork patterns (Starr & Walker, 1982).

Academic institutions have long ago realized that they serve as the institutions of learning, changing attitudes and beliefs, and preparing students for a more challenging world (Gaddi, 2016). The real-life challenges are alive today and as such the need for access to graduate programs remains vital given the issues such as increases in mass incarceration, inequality and injustices, mental and medical illness, homelessness, and substance use (Alexander, 2012; Ferguson, 2009; Jacobson & Rugely, 2007). These are the issues that social workers are trained to address. Social workers are needed to work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. Social workers must
deal and cope with the issues affecting the poor, vulnerable, and disenfranchised (NASW, 2012). Social workers need to be adequately prepared to address the needs and demands of communities and to do no harm to the service users who utilize their services. As a result, being informed if a program is meeting its intended purpose is critical, not only to the program, but the program’s constituents. Program administrators have an ethical obligation to explore whether their programs are meeting the needs of the users, and if not, to find the reasons why using empirical data.

The purpose of the study was to explore some of the social work graduate students’ and graduate faculty’ perceptions of the (a) strengths and weaknesses of a three-phrase OYR Program housed at an social work academic institution on the east coast, and (b) degree of readiness to take and pass the state license master’s in social work exam by the social work graduate students who will enter into the social work profession. The study sought answers to the three research questions:

1. What types of perceptions do the part-time social work graduate students have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?
2. What types of perceptions do social work faculty members have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?
3. What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state Licensed Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?

The participants of the study were students enrolled in the OYR Program in academic years 2016 and 2017 and faculty who taught in the program during the same
period. The researcher conducted the study in the institution where the students attend, and the faculty teach. Purposeful sampling of eight OYR students and four faculty members made up the study. Using semi-structured interview questions in three student focus groups and four individual faculty interviews allowed the researcher to gather demographic data from the students, utilize interview questions to support the research questions, transcribe the data corpus and code each data set separately. The coding initially started out as line-by-line, but with the volume of data, the researcher moved to use chunks of the data (Saldaña, 2013), generating single coded words. The inductive approach assisted the researcher in conducting a thematic analysis of the data by identifying patterns and themes from the rich, thick, descriptions of the participant's perceptions and experiences and used the hermeneutic format for documentation. The researcher identified a total of 15 themes from the three research questions and 18 interview questions. The researcher selected the most prominent categories of the findings for discussion.

Implications of Findings

**Research question 1.** What types of perceptions do the part-time social work graduate students have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program? The researcher used categories of *before acceptance, after acceptance and program graduates* to denote the findings. Although there were 23 overall categories, the researcher identified six major findings. The part-time social work graduate students believed that the OYR Program has several key strengths and areas of growth.

*Strength 1: the school and program are respected.* The social work graduate students indicated that the OYR Program and Institution are respected by community.
Although the academic institution is known in the community of social work, the positive feedback from their colleagues and peers about choosing this academic institution was vital. The OYR students had firsthand experience of the respect afforded their colleagues, as well as their knowledge, growth, and promotional opportunities. Additionally, the students shared the positive feelings evoked from observing and working with the interns who are students from the academic institution of the study. The intensity of the students' emotions and their strong desire to attend the institution was palpable.

Pickens (2005) discusses how perceptions are formed through our senses, registered by individuals responding to stimuli and that based on prior experiences and beliefs, individuals form perceptions. With positive or negative feedback, the author argues, “it reinforces the interpretation of one’s reality or may cause internal conflict” (Pickens, 2005, p. 43). The students viewed the information generated from their colleagues positively. Before applying to the academic institution, the students had positive feedback and encouragement, and realized the importance of attending graduate school via the OYR Program. Pickens’s (2005) process of perception supports what Miles et al. (2014) refer to as carefully reading and reflecting on core content which gives you an intimate, interpretive familiarity with information. The students’ observations of successes by both their colleagues and interns utilizing the program led them to want to improve their skills, earning potential, and growth.

**Strength 2: students value the part-time model.** Students value the Social Work OYR Program and appreciate the part-time model designed for working professionals. The OYR Program remains crucial and vital due to the affordability of the tuition, accessibility for employed students, and the institutions reputation, social justice lens,
community involvement and the professional growth of alumni. Working professionals can ill afford to give up their jobs to return to school. As such, accessibility and affordability remain critically important to the students as it provides the opportunity to develop and hone their social work skills. Further, the workforce continues to need qualified social workers to meet the demands of their service users.

Hoge, Stuart, Morris, Flaherty, Paris, and Goplerud (2013) write that there is a consensus that the behavioral health field had been facing a workforce crisis of growing proportions and that the training provided to direct care staff without graduate degrees tended to be minimal. In an era of increasing complexity and change in individual and social practice environments, there is a need for more innovative approaches that engage students in active learning to promote critical thinking and the development of skills to analyze and problem solve (Tuchman & LaLane, 2011). A workforce without trained and competent staff runs the risk of not being able to respond to the issues of service users.

The findings were consistent with the literature regarding the OYR students as older, more ethnically diverse, having other familial responsibilities, and working in agency settings such as homeless services, mental health, and child welfare (Haffey & Starr, 1988; Hopkins et al., 2005; Hussein et al., 2011; Miller et al., 2015). The authors wrote about students who were older, unable to attend 2 years of full-time graduate school because of financial and family reasons, had household incomes, some had families, were recently married and were relied upon by their families for support. When they applied to social work graduate school, they were unable to relinquish their jobs to attain access (Salmon & Walker, 1981).
**Strength 3: the program is supportive and meaningful.** The Social Work OYR Program students believe the program is supportive and meaningful. The OYR students, during the first year of acceptance, known as Time Frame I, enjoyed the program citing their excitement with returning to school, beginning the attainment of their educational goals, and figuring out the intricacies of the program. The categories included, the rigors of the program, program limitations, no break in the school year, faculty being supportive, having a great first year and celebrating a big accomplishment.

Through interaction with program staff, faculty, peers, and the environment within the social work academic environment, the findings from the student’s perspective in Time Frame I supports the study’s theoretical framework of symbolic interaction. SI focuses on how meaning and identity are co-created through interaction and how they define and interpret the situation and the people around them (Tracy, 2012). The SI model assumes that peoples’ actions result from their perceptions and interpretations of the situations that confront them in their everyday lives (Athens, 2010; Aksan et al., 2009; Blumer, 1986). The three premises of SI argued by Blumer (1986) are (a) that human beings act toward things based on the meaning that the thing has for them, (b) the meaning of things derived from the social interaction that one has with one’s fellows, and (c) these meanings are handled in and modified through an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things s/he encounters. The OYR students demonstrated that they were committed to their education by applying to the school of social work of their choice, through their interactions with each other, which created a supportive environment where they shared concerns, gave meaning to their lived experiences within the program and handled each obstacle that could have derailed their goal attainment of
access. In addition to the strengths, the graduate student interviews revealed several areas of growth as well.

**Area of growth 1: increased assistance during residency.** The graduate students believe that the Social Work OYR part-time program needs to find ways of preparing the graduate students for the residency year. The effect the lack of preparation had on the students transitioning to the residency year known as Time Frame II, was difficult and stressful for the OYR students. The students shared their concerns regarding the lack of preparation from both the academic institution and their employers. This finding suggested that Time Frame II, the residency year, where the pedagogy of field education is the center of determining, valuing, and promoting competency is the most problematic time for OYR students. During this time frame, OYR students are expected to resolve the issues affecting the systems responsible for ensuring that they receive the education they paid for and deserve. It is during this time where the OYR students must navigate and self-advocate to meet the demands of practice readiness as defined by executing an acceptable field placement opportunity, identifying an appropriately certified field instructor, ensuring that the task assignments meet the criteria of the school, and they must be the conduit of communicator between the school and agency.

Simultaneously, they must prepare for the dual role of being a student and employee within the organizations. They must bear in mind the politics and changes within their organizations, refrain from stepping on toes, and rely on their relationships to address issues or expedite responses. They must also forget the training they were taught in the organizations and begin to insert and adopt the theories and interventions taught at
the school so that they can practice and become competent in their methodology (micro or macro) and field of practice (health mental health, child welfare, and gerontology).

The lack of preparation and involvement of both the organization and school to assist in the process leading up to and during Time Frame II signifies the larger issue the lack of human resources plays into the process. Bolman and Deal (2003) remind us of the importance of human resources as one of the four-frame models that leaders and managers should use to understand the central concepts of employee’s needs, skills, and relationships, and that the challenge is to align organizational and human needs. This argument is also supported by Ton and Hall (2014) when they discussed the importance of human resources to provide support to staff to improve their skills, knowledge to perform their jobs effectively. The findings suggest that there is a bad job strategy employed by the OYR students because they alone have the responsibility to fix the problems within Time Frame II, which are difficult. The OYR students are expected to work long hours, deal with field instructors who are inflexible, and deal with the academic institution’s hands-off policy in addressing the concerns of the OYR students.

The expectation from both the school and organizations put the OYR Time Frame II students in an unattainable position to continuously problem solve. The constant problem solving has affected the OYR students’ ability to function, as they expressed feelings of being overwhelmed, overworked, stressed, and exhausted, which are all signs of burnout. Burnout has been a part of the social work literature for decades (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2002; Kinman & Grant 2011; Zlotnik, 2003). Because social workers work with individuals, families, communities, and in organizations where the clients are often underserved and in need of critical services, they usually lack access to critically needed
resources (Jarman-Rohde et al., 1997). Recently the topic of burnout gained consensus in its application to students (Salmela-Aro, Kiuru, Leskinen & Nurmi, 2009; Ying, 2009). The authors attributed burnout to students as they often deal with stressful situations in the academic institutions while attending school and they become exhausted from managing multiple tasks.

At the time of program development and inception, 47 years ago, Haffey and Starr (1988) posited that the Time Frame II period would have been the most difficult and challenging of the three time frames and recommended that the school ensured the human resources and capital to bridge the relationship between the school, organizations, and students. Both the organizations and the academic institutions must address this critical area and find ways to provide support to the OYR students and alleviate the additional burden placed on them to ensure that they have a viable placement opportunity that meets the requirement of the school, and by extension the Council on Social Work Education.

Researchers have long ago called for changes to the traditional mode of conducting field placement opportunities when there was the realization that the environment changed, and more employment-based students were returning to school. Hopkins et al. (2005) suggested that it was time to move away from the traditional social work field placement and seek alternative methods given the need of a subset of part-time, older, employed students who need access to social work education. Employment-based field placement is important to the OYR Program model as this type of arrangement is critical to the students’ growth (Koroloff, 1989).

**Area of growth 2: need for full-time professors.** The graduate students indicated that the institution must include more full-time professors in the OYR Program. The
students’ perceptions indicated that the absence of tenured full-time faculty teaching in the OYR Program and classes affects their feelings of unpreparedness, not valued and unimportant. Although the findings point to scheduling conflicts and their implications for the OYR students, they agreed that the lack of access to tenured full-time faculty is unfair as only the full-time students benefit from their knowledge, skills, and expertise.

The findings support the trend occurring in most academic institutions across the United States since 1999 relating to the hiring of part-time adjuncts. According to the data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2018), in 1999, part-time faculty composed 51% of the instructional faculty group in degree-granting institutions; by 2011, 77% of the instructional faculty were part-time even though there was a slight decrease by 4% between 2011 and 2016.

Part-time adjuncts were sought after because state legislatures, business leaders, and others have challenged higher education to serve growing numbers of place- and time-challenged students and align educational programs with economic development goals (Lyons, 2007). Adjunct faculty, because they meet the needs of organizations due to their professional roles within their field of practice, are critical in the cost savings opportunities needed by academia (Green, 2007; Lyons, 2007). Part-time adjuncts are known as specialists, experts, and professionals. They are known to freelance due to the need for extra earnings and are committed to their field of practice. They may be at the end of their careers and have a desire to give back to their communities, or inspiring academics (Green, 2007; Leslie & Gappa, 2003; Lyons, 2007).

The trend is not only observed in the United States, but internationally as well. Fagan-Wilen, Springer, Ambrosino and White (2006) argued that there is a marked
increase in the number of adjunct faculty employed nationally and internationally, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, in all academic areas, including schools of social work. They posit that the linkage of the university to the community examines experienced social work practitioners, many of whom represent diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives, and bring their seasoned administrative, policy, or clinical skills into the classroom.

This finding creates a challenge which behooves the academic institution to take a second look at the best strategies to create a balance between the OYR and full-time program. The OYR students are meaning-making of the lack of access to full-time tenured faculty as a diminishing factor within the program. Regardless of the reasons why institutions across the nation or the world are utilizing adjuncts to meet their missions, it has affected how the OYR students view the program. The structural lens suggested by Bolman and Deal (2003) demands that the central concepts relating to rules, roles, goals, policies, and the environment need attention. While the adjuncts do offer much to the OYR students, the perception remains that something substantial is missing from their education. The onus is on the academic institution to address.

**Research question 2.** What types of perceptions do social work faculty members have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program? There were six major findings identified by the researcher based on the analysis of the faculty’s data set. The major findings were (a) their endorsement of the OYR Program, (b) accreditation of the OYR Program within the institution, (c) prior knowledge of the institution, (d) commitment to the OYR students, (e) lack of preparation, and (f) structural issues affecting the OYR Program.
**Strength 1: faculty pride.** The faculty acknowledge their pride in working for the institution which hosts the OYR Program. The faculty pride shone through when they discussed the recruitment process, their expertise, the historical legacy of once being a student and now a faculty, wanting to teach within an institution where the students had prior social services background, the commitment they felt to the group, and making the choice to teach at this institution. After years of teaching in the academic institution, the faculty continues to enjoy their role, and there was no evidence of burnout, disillusionment, or discontent. They had a wide range of leadership roles, they engage in various committees within the school, and the adjunct was recently hired within the institution to supplement the role in the classroom. Ton (2014) refers to this as the good job strategy when employees are happy, motivated, and committed. The motivations of the faculty stem from their leadership roles within the institution, and they enjoy their work. Their work includes the ability to change the attitudes and beliefs of their students and to make them develop and transcend their lives, goals, and educational ability. Transformational leadership speaks to this transcendental growth, of inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and consideration of individuals (Bass, 1999). Odumeru and Ogbonna (2013) state that leaders in organizations and nations make things happen, and faculty ought to within academic institutions.

**Strength 2: faculty knowledgeable of the value of the program.** The faculty were knowledgeable about the accreditation process and the importance the institution placed on the OYR Program. All faculty were knowledgeable about the accreditation process which included the OYR Program. The categories included the curriculum design, the method-based process of the school, the needs of the OYR students, the importance of
access to learning, the structure of the program and the lack of availability of certain classes for the OYR students.

The faculty recognized that without the Council of Social Work Education approval, the OYR Program could not have remained a vital resource within the institution, providing access for over 47 years, to working individuals seeking opportunities to return to graduate school. The faculty acknowledged the rigors of the program, although their lens differed in how they believed the systems work within the institution. The faculty all looked at the categories from their perspective without bridging or connecting the systems within the OYR Program and its impact on the OYR students. The operations within the school speak to what Lencioni (2006) described as working in silos and what appears to be an even larger issue affecting social work in general. While there were attempts to bridge the issue relating to the social work profession externally (generalist to a specialist profession or that the profession is predominantly clinically focused), internally the discussion is about turf and not about the institution’s role in preparing OYR students to become qualified social workers, regardless of chosen method- micro or macro practice.

There is a rallying cry within the profession to bridge the micro-macro divide in social work practice (Ezell, Chernesky, & Healy, 2004; Pritzker & Applewhite, 2015; Rothman & Mizrahi, 2014). Ezell et al. (2004) argues about the inhospitable treatment administrative students received in the academic institutions. Rothman and Mizrahi (2014) remind us from a historical perspective, that the social work profession took root because it had a dual focus mission – Mary Richmond on one side providing services to individuals and families, and Jane Adams on the other, representing environmental
change to meet broad human needs. Pritzker and Applewhite (2015) also remind us that all social workers are expected to adhere to the NASW’s (2008) code of ethics and its commitment to both meeting individual needs and furthering social justice through organizational, community, and societal interventions. Hill et al. (2010) also agreed when they argued that social work spans all stages of life, takes place in multiple settings, and targets client systems at all levels from individuals, to groups, to national and international policies. The social work academic institution is the gatekeeper to the profession and as such, has the responsibility of preparing social workers to enter the profession. Based on the findings, the institution needs to identify a rallying cry as suggested by Lencioni (2006), to bridge this micro-macro divide affecting the OYR students particularly, but all students generally.

**Strength 3: knowledgeable faculty.** All faculty were knowledgeable about the social work academic institution and have positive work experience at the location. The faculty members were aware of the institutions OYR Program, they had institutional memory of the organizational changes affecting the program design, and they their perceptions of the OYR students were positive. The findings revealed that all the faculty were aware of the academic institution’s positive history, the affordability of the tuition, the number of renowned leaders within the profession hired at the institution, and faculty who are alumni. Further, the faculty mission of educating masters’ level social work students with work experience aligns with the schools’ mission and meets one of the primary focus of all the faculty. While the findings were positive, the faculty recognized the erosion over time of the OYR structure. The reduction in resources to the OYR Program contributed to the steady decline in the program vitality.
The Bolman and Deal (2003) human resources lens through which to view organizations exemplifies the detrimental effect it has on program sustainability. Without human resources, programs will experience difficulties on every level. The gaps which become pronounced can compromise the organizations and the persons whom the program ought to affect. Chen (2012) argues that it is important to provide stakeholders with what actions are required to solve a social, educational, or health problem to improve their existing or future programs. In this instance, the faculty recognizes that a need exists to address the lack of human resources within the OYR Program.

**Strength 4: committed faculty.** All four faculty expressed their commitment to the OYR Program and students within the academic institution. Because the faculty were aware of the program, their positive perceptions of the OYR students, their institutional memory and the organizational changes affecting the OYR Program design they remain committed to the students. The faculty acknowledge that the OYR students’ commitment to their work, wanting to achieve success, their willingness to listen, think, and respond were great attributes. The faculty believe that the OYR students are self-aware, they need support, they are committed to their learning, they connect with their professors, and they are accepting of the work that needs completing. The faculty agreed that the OYR students are more mature, older, and have numerous responsibilities.

**Area for growth 1: greater support is needed.** The faculty believes that the institution must provide greater support for transition of the OYR students during Time Frame II the residency year (2nd year). All the faculty perceived that the OYR students were not prepared for Time Frame II, their residency year. The faculty believed that their primary focus is on the classroom work and as such were not part of the process in
transitioning the students. They acknowledge the problems and recognize that the OYR students need support during the transition from Time Frame I to Time Frame II, as this is the critical time of bridging theory and practice. The faculty recognized that they were not included in the process and saw this as an opportunity for change.

The findings supported what the program designers knew at the point of inception of the OYR Program model 47 years ago. The designers of the program cautioned stakeholders of the need to ensure the assignment of staff to help in this critical area. The need for support included advocating on behalf of the OYR students at the organization and institution levels as without this intervention the risk to the program is significant (Haffey & Starr, 1988; Salmon & Walker, 1981; Starr & Walker, 1982)

**Area for growth 2: students require greater support and assistance.** The faculty indicated that the academic institution needs to find ways of helping the students in the Social Work OYR part-time program address the challenges faced within their organization. The faculty indicated that the OYR students face challenges to address the needs of clients while their agencies are going through changes. Some of the challenges include the complex and complicated lives of the clients the OYR students serve at their place of employment, the staff turnover at the agencies, and not having qualified staff to provide field instruction.

Simultaneously the faculty identified issues of the OYR students not having cases to meet the demands of bridging theory and practice. The lack of providing OYR student with cases to support their learning in field education, if not provided, will negatively affect and compromise the student’s ability to integrate theory and practice and can compromise the institutions’ accreditation process and its mission. All accredited
programs in higher education must have a process in place to assess the extent to which graduates demonstrate the requisite skills for competent professional practice (Petracchi & Zastrow, 2010). One way of accomplishing this task is through the review of current and existing cases in the classroom and in field education to ascertain if students are achieving practice behaviors as indicators of core social work practice (Petracchi & Zastrow, 2010). Each academic institution must adhere to the Council of Social Work Education to ensure that they are meeting the standard of competency of their social work students. The faculty noted that fieldwork as the signature pedagogy of social work enforces the integration of knowledge and practice. Larrison and Korr (2013) agreed with the integration of knowledge and practice as part of the pedagogical framework when they assert that “signature pedagogies in social work practice involve the integration of practitioner knowledge, performative action, and awareness that emphasizes the development of the professional self” (p. 194). Similarly, Boitel and Fromm (2014) posit that signature pedagogy is the process by which the teaching and learning interaction where students acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and values of the profession of social work.

In addition to the recognition of the academic institution’s responsibility of ensuring that their student becomes competent through practice, faculty also asserted that organizations are having difficulties in providing competent and qualified field experiences because of issues affecting organizations. Faculty attributed some of the issues to staff turnover, reduction in resources, burnout, and the lack of qualified social workers. Several researchers have supported and identified this issue as a significant...
concern within the field for decades (Jarman-Rohde et al., 1997; Wayne, Bogo & Raskin 2010).

**Research question 3.** What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state Licensed Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?

**Area for growth 1: provide greater support for exam preparation.** The students of the OYR Program believe that the social work institution must provide support to improve their readiness to take and pass the License Master’s Social Work Exam. Although the students perceived that they lack preparation by the institution in the areas of the curriculum design and test preparation they also felt that it was their responsibility to conduct a self-assessment and determine their level of readiness to take the exam.

All the students’ recognized the importance of taking and passing the license masters’ social work exam as a conduit to becoming legitimized with the ability to work under the title of a social worker. At the time of the study, one of the students took and passed the licensure exam indicating that there was some level of preparation done due to program completion, self-preparation, and studying. On the other hand, some students felt that there was little, or no preparation done by the academic institution, even though there was recognition that the school implemented a test preparation program. The findings indicated that the overall perception is low as the students felt that the academic institution waits too long to provide information on the importance of taking and preparing for the licensure exam. The findings also suggest that the students recognize their role in preparing for the exam and that they must create supportive teams, participate in licensure test preparation activities, and study to take the exam.
Area for growth 2: increase institutional support for licensure preparation. The faculty of the OYR Program believes that the social work institution must do more to prepare the OYR students for licensure. Although the faculty believes that the OYR students can take and pass the licensure exam by nature of completing the program, their perception is that the academic institution must do more to prepare the OYR students to enter the profession as licensed social workers. There was agreement that there is a perceived lack of preparedness from the institution as the messaging within the environment on licensure attainment is poor. Further, there is agreement that the faculty lacks content on the licensure exam and that the curriculum does not address the issue around licensure and preparedness. The findings also showed that there is a perception that the OYR students, because they compartmentalize their lives, are not focusing on preparing to take the test until post-graduation.

Limitations of the Study

There are a few limitations to the study. One involves another cohort of students and the other relates to challenges in method.

Additional OYR cohort. There is another cohort of OYR students within the institution not included in the study due to time constraints and the schedules of the students. This cohort of OYR students has a solid structure of staff and faculty ratio, organizational support, and financial support and the organizational and city level. Hearing their voices and seeing if there are any differences in their perceptions would have been a great opportunity.

Method challenges. Although the study had one macro student and faculty, there is a need to explore the issues and concerns affecting the preparedness of the macro students’ feelings and thoughts about state licensure. There is a perception that macro
students should not take the licensure exam and this may have far-reaching implications for that cohort of students because of the changes in NYS law relating to practicing under the title of social worker.

**Researcher bias.** Because the researcher is a social worker with over 30 years of experience, five of which have been in the institution teaching OYR students, the attempt was made to check my feelings, thoughts, and emotions. There were times when the researcher felt the pull of the OYR students as they talked about their lived experiences, the feelings of exhaustion, burnout, and being overwhelmed.

**Recommendations**

The literature review and the study indicated that access remains a critical force for working students’ who cannot afford to give up their jobs and enter academic, social work institutions. The demand remains for this specialized group of employees who benefit from institutions willing to change attitudes, skills, and beliefs and prepare students for a profession willing to work with the most vulnerable, challenged and disenfranchised. Further research is needed on the effectiveness of programs like the OYR model and how the programs are meeting the needs of the OYR students.

There are numerous recommendations for the future success of the OYR Program and its students. Employed social services employees continue to need access to schools of social work to improve and hone their skills to work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. The One Year Residency program has many strengths but lacks human resources to provide support to the students, organizations, and the faculty.
There also needs to be a greater focus on transition. Transitioning to a work environment needs attention. The goals are to review the agency agreement forms early, address any issues or concerns from the agency or academic institutions, and prepare the students for their 2nd year where the dual role of student and employee is more pronounced. Additionally, faculty involved in the OYR Program needs training to assist with educating students about the 2nd year, this includes discussion about the purpose of linking theory and practice during their field placements.

Importantly, OYR students need early access to information regarding the social work license exam preparation. Aligned with this, faculty to create language in the curriculum which supports information on the licensed social work exam. Faculty need to create an environment that supports taking the social work license exam regardless of method or personal ideology.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

1. The study showed that many challenges are affecting the OYR Program and the students. These challenges begin at admission and last throughout the life cycle of the program. The school cannot wait until Time Frame II to begin exploring with the organizations about changes affecting their employees. The school cannot leave it up to the OYR students to cultivate, navigate, instigate, and locate the placement, the field instructor, the tasks, and respond to the programmatic needs. The school needs to answer the question: are we better than this? Are we as a school willing to put the onus on the OYR students to problem solve every facet of the issues affecting the program? Further research is needed to answer these questions.
2. Although the OYR students are taking and passing the license masters’ social work exam, there was only one macro student and faculty participating in the study. Licensure preparation from the school’s perspective includes every graduate. The school should determine the best way to create a culture of licensure expectation that includes everyone from admissions.

3. Further study is needed to look at outcomes from other schools providing access to employed social work students across the United States and internationally to address common issues and or concerns, given that social work is not just limited to the United States.

Conclusion

After 47 years in existence, the qualitative phenomenological study was appropriate in exploring the student and faculty perceptions about the OYR Program. Many academic institutions have responded to the growing demands and needs of working students needing to maintain their jobs, but wanting to improve themselves educationally (Haffey & Starr, 1988; Raskin et al., 2008; Zastrow & Weeden, 2007; Zosky et al., 2004). In providing access, educational institutions seeking accreditation and reaccreditation for programs like the OYR model are responsible and accountable to the needs of this specialized group of students which they committed to educating, training, and graduating. As such, educational institutions should know how their students and faculty are faring, they should be aware of their needs, and most of all, hear from the stakeholders on how best to improve or change what is not working, or celebrate those areas that are working (Chen, 2012). Since social work academic institutions are ultimately responsible for the preparation of their students to enter the profession, it
behooves them to live up to their accreditation purpose – a purpose of graduating excellent well-trained social workers to meet the demands of individuals, families, communities, and organizations.

The OYR students as part of the student body need to have confidence that the school will assist in the process of providing them with information, supporting them through the difficult process of Time Frame II, their residency year, and support their bid to take and pass the social work licensure exam. Similarly, the faculty concerns regarding the institution’s lack of preparation and the integration of the curriculum in addressing the language relevant to the licensure exam need attention. The faculty believes that the school is preparing the OYR students. However, they also recognize the need for improvement.

This study allowed the researcher to answer three research questions focusing on the perceptions of both the students and faculty in the OYR Program. The researcher listened to the participants and identified categories and themes derived from their voices and lived experiences. The identified themes revealed the issues affecting the OYR Program remains 47 years after its inception. Additionally, the findings had support in the literature as it identified critical issues relevant to the needs of students in specialized programs, especially during the field placement time when the dual role is more pronounced in employment-based field placements (Haffey & Starr, 1988; Wayne et al., 2006; Zastrow & Weeden, 2007). Further, the findings confirmed the resilient, committed, and dedicated nature of the older more mature students, who could not afford to give up their jobs to return to school and who had multiple responsibilities in addition to attending school (Salmon & Walker, 1981; Zastrow & Weeden, 2007).
The context of the study was a purposeful sampling of eight students in three focus groups interviews and four faculty members who were individually interviewed. The 12 participants met the study’s criteria of either being a student with the OYR designation and registered, or faculty who taught within the institution in academic years 2016 and 2017. The participants received and signed the letters of consent, the students completed 14-item demographic interview questions, and 17 open-ended semi-structured interview questions which guided the focus groups and the individual interviews aligned to answer the three research questions.

The researcher used a descriptive qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the perceptions of the students and faculty about the OYR Program. The 14-semi-structured interview questions allowed the researcher to answer the following three research questions:

1. What types of perceptions do the part-time social work graduate students have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?
2. What types of perceptions do social work faculty members have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?
3. What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students and social work faculty members about student readiness to take and pass the state Licensed Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?

The interview questions were as follows: (a) five interview questions answered by the students only and aligned to RQ1, (b) six interview questions answered by the faculty only and aligned to RQ2, (c) two interview questions answered by the students only and
aligned to RQ3 and (d) three interview questions answered by the faculty only and
aligned to RQ3. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, which led to the
researcher reading the data corpus numerous times and coding each data set separately.
The researcher coded the data using the winnowing technique described by Miles et al.
(2014). Further, the researcher used first, second, and third cycle coding to identify the
themes and patterns of the thick, rich, descriptions of the research participants and placed
them in categories and subcategories. Because of this process there were 364 themes,
364 categories, and 263 codes for the students and 300 themes, 300 categories, and 167
codes for the faculty.

The discussion of the results from the study focused on 16 major findings from
the student and faculty perspectives. An overview of the findings follows.

Students overall perception relating to RQ1. The student focus interviews
generated six major findings listed in subcategories of before acceptance, after acceptance
– Time Frame I and Time Frame II, III and program graduates to establish clarity. The six
major findings included the knowledge used by the prospective students to decide on
seeking a seat within the institution, the overall positive experience of Time Frame I, and
the lack of preparation experienced by the students from the academic institution and their
organizations during Time Frame II which negatively affected the students. The feelings
of burnout categorize Time Frame III and the graduates of the program.

The OYR students entering the program are excited and filled with awe of
entering such an esteemed institution where access is critical, tuition is affordable, the
social justice framework is significant, and their colleagues and peers to whom they look
up to and respect, recommended the program without reservation. During the first year –
Time Frame I, most of the OYR students remain optimistic as they were accepted to graduate school and are on their way to meeting their educational goals and objectives. As the OYR students continue their journey, Time Frame II is the most difficult, as it integrates the dual role process where the student feels responsible for every facet of the journey, up to and including negotiating, advocating, and identifying and solving problems within both the institution and their organizations. Additionally, they are sacrificing, traveling from borough to borough, to secure supervision because it is their burden. By Time Frame III and graduation, the students express the feeling of isolation, burnout, and exhaustion.

**Faculty overall perception relating to RQ2.** There were six major findings identified by the researcher based on the analysis of the faculty’s data set. The major findings were (a) their endorsement of the OYR Program, (b) accreditation of the OYR Program within the institution, (c) prior knowledge of the institution, (d) commitment to the OYR students, (e) lack of preparation, and (f) structural issues affecting the OYR Program. Overall the faculty acknowledges the importance of working in the institution and their pride shone through during the interview.

The faculty understood the accreditation process and knew that the OYR Program was vital to the schools’ mission and vision, which also aligned to theirs of providing access to a group of students who could not give up their jobs to enter social work school full time. The faculty also expressed a commitment to the OYR students referencing their willingness and commitment to their education. On the other hand, the faculty recognized that some structural issues were affecting the program and that the onus is on the school to fix this. For example, the faculty agreed that the human resource function is lacking
within Time Frame II from both the academic and organizational perspectives. The faculty agreed that they were not involved in the process of providing information to the students about Time Frame II and saw this as an area where they could improve in playing a pivotal role on behalf of the entire school in reducing the chaos, stress, and weariness of the OYR students.

**Students overall perception relating to RQ3.** The students identified three major findings regarding their perceptions of readiness to take and pass the license masters’ social work exam and enter the social work profession. The themes include lack of preparation by the institution, self-awareness, and expectation and legitimization. The categorization included test preparation, curriculum design, student responsibility, self-assessment, readiness, and professional conflicts. The five students who this process affected at the time of the study all agreed that the school lacked timeliness in discussing the exam, providing information, and preparing them to take and pass the test.

Additionally, one of the students questioned whether the method choice provided the utmost level of preparedness to take the licensure exam upon program completion. The macro-micro divide is an important cry not only to the institution, but also the governing body of the social work community. Of importance though, all five recognized that the onus is also on them to self-evaluate and determine readiness to take the test. Of the two graduates, one already took the licensure exam in another state and passed it, attesting to the fact that not only are the students prepared by nature of program completion, but that they also had to take responsibility and form study groups, attend scheduled test prep sessions, and study.
Faculty overall perception relating to RQ3. The faculty identified two themes relating to the systems of preparation and connecting those systems with the OYR students entering the profession. The categories included the academic environment, the curriculum, the organizational environment, and student’s involvement and behavior. Like the students, the faculty all believe that the OYR students can take and pass the license social work exam by nature of completing the program. However, there was agreement that there is a perceived lack of preparedness from the institution as the messaging within the environment on licensure attainment is poor. Further, there is agreement that the faculty lacks content on the licensure exam and that the curriculum does not address the issue around licensure and preparedness. The findings also showed that there is a perception that because the OYR students compartmentalize their lives, they are not focusing on preparing to take the test until post-graduation. The findings also revealed that the faculty believed in the OYR students and indicated that they are successful post-graduation.

Overall, the study showed that access to social work education contuses to remain vital for working professionals who cannot afford to relinquish their jobs and attend school full time. The institution, based on the findings, must continue to provide this needed support as individuals, families, communities, and organizations are dependent on the need for qualified social workers to provided need services.

Secondly, there is room for improvement in the OYR Program area using the four frames of Bolman and Deal (2003) in viewing organizational issues, as well as integrating Blumer’s (1986) symbolic interaction of how humans give meaning to their experiences within social structures. The critical areas to address are the lack of human
resources in Time Frame II, and III critical areas that affect the pedagogy of social work education – the field education process where the learning takes place to ensure the development of competency in practice. Further, the licensure examination process, both in the non-clinical method areas and providing information before graduation, is critical.

Finally, the research findings provided also provided recommendations for future studies to continue to understand the issues and concerns of the OYR students given the increase in the application rate of employed students returning to work. The researcher based on the findings from the study makes four recommendations.

1. Explore the allocation of resources needed to enrich the OYR students experience within academic institutions;
2. The deans are the leaders within the academic institution, as such they are responsible for ensuring that their graduates, regardless of method area is trained, educated and equipped to take and pass the social work licensed exam to practice under the title of social worker upon graduation. Academic institutions are responsible, and they should take on a leadership role to address the micro-macro divide and act. A qualitative study to explore the perceptions of deans of social work in an academic institution as to the lack of response on this key issue is relevant and timely.
3. The findings suggest that due to the students’ and the OYR Program’s schedule, there is limited access to the full-time tenured faculty and as such, there is an overwhelming use of adjunct faculty in the OYR Program. This perception leads the students to question the quality of the program. While there are numerous studies on the use of adjuncts in higher education and
graduate programs, a study exploring the perception of the full-time tenured and adjunct faculty who specifically teach within the OYR Program needs attention.

4. Social work is a national and international profession where there are programs worldwide accepting working students who cannot afford to give up their jobs to attend school full-time. Further study is needed to look at outcomes from other schools providing access to employed social work students across the United States and internationally to address common issues and or concerns given that social work is not just limited to the United States.

The need for educational programs for working individuals who desire to become licensed social workers is evident. There is a tremendous need for professionals who are well trained and educated, and who are ready to take and pass the licensure exams. The OYR Program provides a great opportunity for those individuals. Focus on improvements can make this program and others like it even stronger and more valuable in the world of social work education.
References


Hussein, S., Manthorpe, J., & Harris, J. (2011). Do the characteristics of seconded or sponsored social work students in England differ from those of other social work students? A quantitative analysis using national data. *Social Work Education, 30*(03), 345-359.


# Appendix A

## OYR Time Frames

### Time Frame One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSW 701 Social Welfare Policy and Services I</td>
<td>SSW 712 Human Behavior in the Learning Environment II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 711 Human Behavior in the Social Environment I</td>
<td>SSW 718 Social Work Practice Learning Lab II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 717 Social Work Practice Learning Lab I</td>
<td>SSW Method Choice I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SSW 721-Clinical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 713 Human Behavior in the Social Environment III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 702 Social Welfare Policy II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Time Frame Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSW 751 Social Research I</td>
<td>Electives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW Method Choice</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SSW 722 Clinical II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 741 Community Organizing I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field of Practice Course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 767 Field Practicum I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW Method Choice</td>
<td>Elective (Option)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 723 Clinical III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 742 Community Organizing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 752 Social Work Research II</td>
<td>SSW 790 Professional Seminar* (Option)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>SSW 743 Community Organization III*** (Option)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSW 768 Field Practicum II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Time Frame Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSW 790 Professional Seminar (Option)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 743 Community Organization III*** (Option)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students can choose to take SSW 790 in the summer term to graduate in 2 years or decide to extend their graduation date to the fall.

**Taking courses during the winter might require out of pocket expense.

***Students can choose to take SSW 743 in the summer term to graduate in 2 years or decide to extend their graduation date to the fall.
Appendix B

Eight “Big Tent” Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for Quality</th>
<th>Various means, practices, and methods through which to achieve (the end goal)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worthy topic</td>
<td>The topic of the research is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Timely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich rigor</td>
<td>• Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The study uses sufficient, abundant, appropriate, and complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Theoretical constructs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sincerity</td>
<td>• Data and time in the field</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sample(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Context(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>• Data collection and analysis processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resonance</td>
<td>The study is characterized by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-reflexivity about subjective values, biases, and inclinations of the researcher(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transparency about the methods and challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant contribution</td>
<td>The research is marked by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical</td>
<td>• Thick description, concrete detail, explication of tacit (non-textual) knowledge, and showing rather than telling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Triangulation or crystallization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Multivocality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaningful coherence</td>
<td>• Member reflections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The research influences, affects, or moves readers or a variety of audiences through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Aesthetic, evocative representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Naturalistic generalizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transferable findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The research provides a significant contribution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Conceptually/theoretically
• Practically
• Morally
• Methodologically
• Heuristically

The research considers
• Procedural ethics (such as human subjects)
• Situational and culturally specific ethics
• Relational ethics
• Exiting ethics (leaving the scene and sharing the research)

The study
• Achieves what it purports to be about
• Uses methods and procedures that fit its stated goals
• Meaningfully interconnects literature, research questions/foci, findings, and interpretations with each other
Appendix C
Maxwell’s (2012) An Interactive Design

OYR Program Design Map

Goals
Explore the issues via the stakeholders
Develop strategy for hearing the lived experiences and perceptions of participants
Link research questions with data collection

Conceptual Framework
Symbolic Interaction
There are multiple perspectives on the issue
Hearing the voices & lived perception of stakeholders
Research questions linked through data and data collection

Research Questions
1. What are the perceptions of the OYR Program in a social work institution among graduate students?
2. What are the perceptions of the OYR Program in a social work institution among a selected group of faculty?
3. How as the OYR Program in the social work institution prepared students to take and pass the state license masters social work exam?

Methods
Focus Group
Interviews
Symbolic Interactions
Triangulation of data
Coding
Cross Case Themes

Results

Validity Threats:
Researcher bias
Internal researcher interview
Feedback/verification
Novice investigator
Appendix D

Student Introduction Letter

Dear Student:

My name is Patricia Gray and I am a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College attempting to conduct a qualitative phenomenological study on the One Year Residency program of which you are a student. In its 47th year the OYR Program has provided access to numerous student who could not leave their jobs to attain a master’s degree in social work. Recently though, there has been significant concerns raised about issues of curriculum circumvention, field placement issues and a lack of taking or passing the licensure masters social work exam of the OYR students.

It is my hope to conduct a qualitative study to hear from the OYR students themselves on their perception of the programs, what they identify as the problem, and their concerns on taking and passing the license masters social work exam. This research can inform the social work community, the dean and other critical staff on the issues as perceived by you, identify what needs fixing and provide recommendations for strengthening the OYR Program.

I received your name and email from the registrar for the purposes of this study per the approval from the Dean. Participating in the study involves filling out an anonymous, user-friendly online demographic questionnaire that takes about 10 minutes to complete. The link below leads to the Web site containing the demographic survey for completion.

Potential participants will be presented with an informed consent form as part of the online demographic questionnaire. Participants will not be asked for their signatures, but only to check a box if they agree to participate. The deadline to submit completed demographic questionnaire is April 30, 2018. To find out more details of the study or to participate, please go to the Qualtrics link below.

If you have any questions about my research or the nature of participation, please feel free to contact me by email at pag08885@sjfc.edu.

Thank you for your time, assistance, and interest in my research topic!

Sincerely,

Ed. D. Candidate, St. John Fisher College, 2019
Appendix E

Letter of Participation

Dear OYR Student

My name is Patricia Gray, and I am a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College. This letter is to request your permission for participation in a qualitative research study of the One Year Residency (OYR) program of which you are a registered student. The purpose of the study is to explore your thoughts and perception about your experience within the program and ascertain to what extent you believe you are being prepared to enter the profession. The goal is to have six to eight students participate in one focus group to explore your thoughts and perceptions of the OYR Program and your preparedness to enter the profession as a qualified social worker. You were selected as a possible participant because you are an OYR student within the school and met the criteria of acceptance based on that factor. Ultimately, this research study is a dissertation process which will be published and may eventually present as a paper in the scholarly journal. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group interview which may be about 2 hours. Should there be a need for clarification, you will be contacted to explain or clarify a point.

Because I cannot guarantee confidentiality given that the process includes a focus group, the risk to you is a breach of confidentiality. Note that participants will be reminded about not discussing participants’ comments in discussion outside the focus group meeting. Note also that you have the right to discontinue your participation in the study at any time without fear of reprisal, influence, or coercion.

The benefit of participating in the study is to provide rich data about the issues impacting you in the OYR Program and your perception about preparedness to enter the profession. There is no remuneration for your participation. This study is anonymous. We will not be collecting or retaining any information about your identity. The records of this study will be kept strictly confidential. The placement of the research records in a locked file and all electronic information will be coded and secured using a password protected file. Audio or videotape recordings will be used to assist me with the transcription of the interviews.

My dissertation committee and I are the ones who will have access to the videotapes that will help with the discussion and feedback to complete my study. The tapes and videos will be kept in a locked drawer and will be destroyed after the dissertation process. I will not include any information in any report I may publish that would make it possible to identify you. Note also that there is no disclosure of your identity once the study is ready for publication in the dissertation journal.
The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may refuse to take part in the study at any time without affecting your relationship with the researcher of this study. You have the right not to answer any question, as well as to withdraw completely from the interview at any point during the process; additionally, you have the right to request that the interviewer not use any of your interview material.

You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have further questions about the study, please feel free to contact me at pag08885@sjfc.edu. If you have other concerns about your rights as a research participant that has not been answered by the researcher, you may contact Jill Rathum chair of SJFC Institutional Review Board at (585) 385-8012.

If you have any problems or concerns that occur because of your participation, you can report them to Jill Rathum at the number above. Alternatively, you can also report concerns by completing a Participant Complaint Form, which is on the IRB website at http://www.sjfc.edu/irb/.

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep, along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by the study investigator.

Participants Name: ________________________  Date: ______________
Participants Signature: ___________________  Date: ______________
Researcher’s Signature: ___________________  Date: ______________
Appendix F

Student Demographic Questions

1. Which academic year were you accepted within the program?
   __2016
   __2017

2. Which Time-frame are you in?
   __Time Frame I
   __Time Frame II
   __Time Frame III

3. What is your Method?
   __Clinical
   __Community Organization Planning & Development
   __Organization Management & Leadership

4. What is your gender?
   __Male
   __Female
   __Transgender
   __Rather not say

5. What is your age?
   __Under 18 years
   __18 to 24 years
   __25 to 34 years
   __35 to 44 years
   __45 to 54 years
   __55 to 64 years
   __65 or older
   __Rather not say

6. What is your race?
   __American Indian or Alaskan Native
   __Asian
   __Black or African-American
7. **What is your marital status?**
   - [ ] Now married or living with partner
   - [ ] Widowed
   - [ ] Divorced
   - [ ] Separated
   - [ ] Never married
   - [ ] Rather not say

8. **Did you submit a signed Agency Executive OYR agreement form prior to admission?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

9. **What is your employment status?**
   - [ ] Employed full-time
   - [ ] Employed part-time
   - [ ] Unemployed
   - [ ] Rather not say

10. **Were there any changes in your employment status since acceptance in the program?**
    - [ ] Yes-please explain
    - [ ] No

11. **What is the highest level of education you have completed?**
    - [ ] Bachelor's degree
    - [ ] Master's degree
    - [ ] Ph.D., law or medical degree
    - [ ] Other advanced degree beyond a Master's degree
    - [ ] Rather not say

12. **Approximately what is your household income?**
    - [ ] $0 - $9,999
    - [ ] $10,000 - $19,999
    - [ ] $20,000 - $29,999
    - [ ] $30,000 - $39,999
    - [ ] $40,000 - $49,999
    - [ ] $50,000 - $59,999
    - [ ] $60,000 - $69,999
    - [ ] $70,000 - $79,999
    - [ ] $80,000 - $89,999
    - [ ] $90,000 - $99,999
    - [ ] $100,000 - $149,999
    - [ ] $150,000 or more
    - [ ] Rather not say
13. **Which setting are you located for work?**
   - Child Welfare
   - Health/Mental Health
   - Schools
   - Homeless Services
   - Justice Center

14. **What is your job title?**
   [Text Box]
Appendix G

Informed Consent Form

St. John Fisher College

Title of study: Social Work Faculty and Graduate Student Perceptions of a One Year Residency Program & Graduates Preparedness to enter The Social Work Profession: A Phenomenological Perspective.

Name(s) of researcher(s): Patricia Gray

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Janice Kelly Phone number for further information:

Purpose of study: The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine the faculty and students’ perception of a One Year Residency (OYR) program and the students’ readiness to enter the social work profession.

Place of study: A Public School of Social Work Academic Institution. Length of participation: Two Hours

Method(s) of data collection: Interviews & Focus Groups

Risks and benefits: The expected risks and benefits of participation in this study are explained below:

The benefit of participating in the study is to provide rich data about the issues impacting the OYR Program and your perception about this group of students’ preparedness to enter the profession, and your views on licensure.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy of subjects: Your confidentiality will be maintained as no identifying information will be used to link you to the study.

Exception to the above: Your information may be shared with appropriate governmental authorities ONLY if you or someone else is in danger, or if we are required to do so by law.
Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy of data collected: The researcher will remove all identifying information and create pseudonyms as well as keep all documents in an encrypted file, in a locked draw at the researchers’ office where no one will have access.

Your information may be shared with appropriate governmental authorities ONLY if you or someone else is in danger, or if we are required to do so by law.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy of data collected: Researcher will utilize codes for ensuring authenticity, but no self-identifying information will use to readily identify the participants.

Your rights: As a research participant, you have the right to:

1. Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to participate.
2. Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
3. Refuse to answer a question without penalty.
4. Be informed of the results of the study.

I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to participate in the above-named study.

______________________________  ____________________________  _________________
Print name (Participant)        Signature                      Date

______________________________  ____________________________  _________________
Print name (Investigator)       Signature                      Date

If you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher(s) listed above. If you experience emotional or physical discomfort due to participation in this study, please contact your personal health care provider or an appropriate crisis service provider (*Provide the number of a local crisis service referral center here). The Institutional Review Board of St. John Fisher College has reviewed this project. For any concerns regarding this study/or if you feel that your rights as a participant (or the rights of another participant) have been violated or caused you undue distress (physical or emotional distress), please contact Jill Rathbun by phone during normal business hours at (585) 385-8012 or irb@sjfc.edu. She will contact a supervisory IRB official to assist you.

All digital audio recordings and transcriptions of interviews will be maintained using a private, locked, and password-protected file and password-protected computer stored securely in the private home of the principal researcher. Electronic files will include assigned identity codes and pseudonyms; they will not include actual names or any information that could personally identify or connect participants to this study. Other
materials, including notes or paper files related to data collection and analysis will be stored securely in unmarked boxes, locked inside a cabinet in the private home of the principal researcher. Only the researcher will have access to electronic or paper records. The digitally recorded audio data will be kept by this researcher for a period of 5 years following publication of the dissertation. Signed informed consent documents will be kept for 5 years after publication. All paper records will be cross-cut shredded and professionally delivered for incineration. Electronic records will be cleared, purged, and destroyed from the hard drive and all devices such that restoring data is not possible.
Appendix H

Faculty Introduction Letter

Dear Faculty:

My name is Patricia Gray and I am a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College attempting to conduct a qualitative phenomenological study on the One Year Residency program of which you are a student. In its 47th year the OYR Program has provided access to numerous student who could not leave their jobs to attain a master’s degree in social work. Recently though, there has been significant concerns raised about issues of curriculum circumvention, field placement issues and a lack of taking or passing the licensure masters social work exam of the OYR students.

It is my hope to conduct a qualitative study to hear from the OYR students themselves on their perception of the programs, what they identify as the problem, and their concerns on taking and passing the license masters social work exam. This research can inform the social work community, the dean and other critical staff on the issues as perceived by you, identify what needs fixing and provide recommendations for strengthening the OYR Program.

I received your name and email from the registrar for the purposes of this study per the approval from the Dean. Participating in the study involves filling out an anonymous, user-friendly online demographic questionnaire that takes about 10 minutes to complete. The link below leads to the Web site containing the demographic survey for completion.

Potential participants will be presented with an informed consent form as part of the online demographic questionnaire. Participants will not be asked for their signatures, but only to check a box if they agree to participate. The deadline to submit completed demographic questionnaire is April 30, 2018.

If you have any questions about my research or the nature of participation, please feel free to contact me by email at pag08885@sjfc.edu.

Thank you for your time, assistance, and interest in my research topic!

Sincerely,

Ed. D. Candidate, St. John Fisher College, 2019
Appendix I

Faculty Letter of Participation

Dear Faculty

My name is Patricia Gray, and I am a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College. This letter is to request your permission for participation in a qualitative research study of the One Year Residency (OYR) program of which you are a faculty. The purpose of the study is to explore your thoughts and perception about your experience within the program and ascertain to what extent you believe you are being prepared to enter the profession. The goal is to have six to eight students participate in one focus group to explore your thoughts and perceptions of the OYR Program and your preparedness to enter the profession as a qualified social worker. You were selected as a possible participant because you are an OYR student within the school and met the criteria of acceptance based on that factor. Ultimately, this research study is a dissertation process which will be published and may eventually present as a paper in the scholarly journal. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group interview which may be about 2 hours. Should there be a need for clarification, you will be contacted to explain or clarify a point.

Because I cannot guarantee confidentiality given that the process includes a focus group, the risk to you is a breach of confidentiality. Note that participants will be reminded about not discussing participants’ comments in discussion outside the focus group meeting. Note also that you have the right to discontinue your participation in the study at any time without fear of reprisal, influence, or coercion.

The benefit of participating in the study is to provide rich data about the issues impacting you in the OYR Program and your perception about preparedness to enter the profession. There is no remuneration for your participation. This study is anonymous. We will not be collecting or retaining any information about your identity. The records of this study will be kept strictly confidential. The placement of the research records in a locked file and all electronic information will be coded and secured using a password protected file. Audio or videotape recordings will be used to assist me with the transcription of the interviews.

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Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep, along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by the study investigator.

Participants Name: ________________________ Date: ________________
Participants Signature: ____________________ Date: ________________
Researcher’s Signature: ____________________ Date: ________________
## Appendix J

### Comprehensive Interview and Focus Group Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What types of perceptions do the part-time social work graduate students have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?</th>
<th>What types of perceptions do faculty members have regarding the Social Work One-Year Residency Graduate Program?</th>
<th>What are the perceptions of both the social work part-time graduate students’ and faculty members about student preparedness to take and pass the state License Master’s Social Work Exam and enter the social work profession?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What were the reasons as to why you selected the social work One-Year Residency graduate program for part-time professionals here at this academic institution?</td>
<td>What were the reasons as to why you decided to teach here in this social work One Year Residency Graduate Program for Part-time professionals at this academic institution?</td>
<td>For the students: How has the OYR Program prepared you to take the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were the reasons as to why you selected the part-time program as opposed to the full-time social work program?</td>
<td>In your opinion, how does the OYR curriculum design and instruction prepare and develop future social workers?</td>
<td>How would you describe your expectations regarding your ability to pass the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe your overall experiences since enrolling into the OYR Program?</td>
<td>How would you describe your overall experiences as a faculty member in the OYR Program?</td>
<td>For the Faculty: How has the OYR Program prepared the students to take the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has the OYR Program prepared you for Time Frame II-The residency year?</td>
<td>What have been your overall observations about the part-time students enrolled within the OYR Program at this particular institution?</td>
<td>How would you describe your expectations regarding the students’ ability to pass the State License Master’s Social Work Exam?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some of the challenges or concerns as you prepare for Time-Frame II?</td>
<td>From your experience, how has the OYR Program prepared students for their residency year?</td>
<td>To your knowledge, how successful have the OYR Program graduates in regard to entering and working within the social work field?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some of the challenges within the OYR Program particularly as the students prepare for their residency year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>