



From Practitioner to Educator 2014

Context of Field Education

Thanks to : Helen Cleak- La Trobe University

Australian context for fieldwork education

Social work fieldwork programs have been influenced by 5 major contextual factors:

- *Industry changes*
- *Educational and training issues*
- *Professional accreditation*
- *Theoretical developments*
- *Government initiatives*

Industry Issues

Increased case complexity and diversity-

- greater worker responsibility for cases; fear of litigation; complex human services systems to negotiate; contracting out, focus on outcomes and profit,

An ageing welfare workforce & forecasted shortage of welfare and health workers

- In 2003, there were 12,600 social workers in the workforce of which 78% were female and 9% over 55. In 2008, there were 17,000 social workers in the workforce of which 80% were female and 14% were over 55 (AIHW, 2010)
The resulting workplace requires students to be work ready, supervisors have less time to supervise, especially when there are learning issues

Education/training issues

Structures

- Higher education is now an expanding and global enterprise with aggressive competition between more Universities as well as private providers
- Mass education, declining government per capita funding to Universities and escalating enrolments since caps taken off

SW PLACEMENTS

589 places in 2000

1104 places to find in 2011

Social Work programs

- Within social work, the process of securing placements has become an increasingly complex and expensive process
- There are also increased enrolments which has lowered the ATAR
- Centralising of placement processes and depersonalising student needs
- Education is generally becoming more remote-on-line, distance education

Students

- Students with more complex learning needs, mental health issues
- Students wanting more flexibility, RPL, part time placements, placements out of normal cycle, more rights
- Increased international students who have specific learning needs

Professional Issues

- An overarching professional standards framework through the AASW Accreditation Standards for fieldwork programs
- Practice Standards for new graduates which has provided the framework for Victorian fieldwork programs
- Code of Ethics (2010)

ASWEAS 2012 – changes for FE in SW programs

- Assessment scale – Victorian model
- OH&S, anti-bullying and safety responsibilities
- Placement in place of employment
- Recognition of Prior Learning

Educational Theories

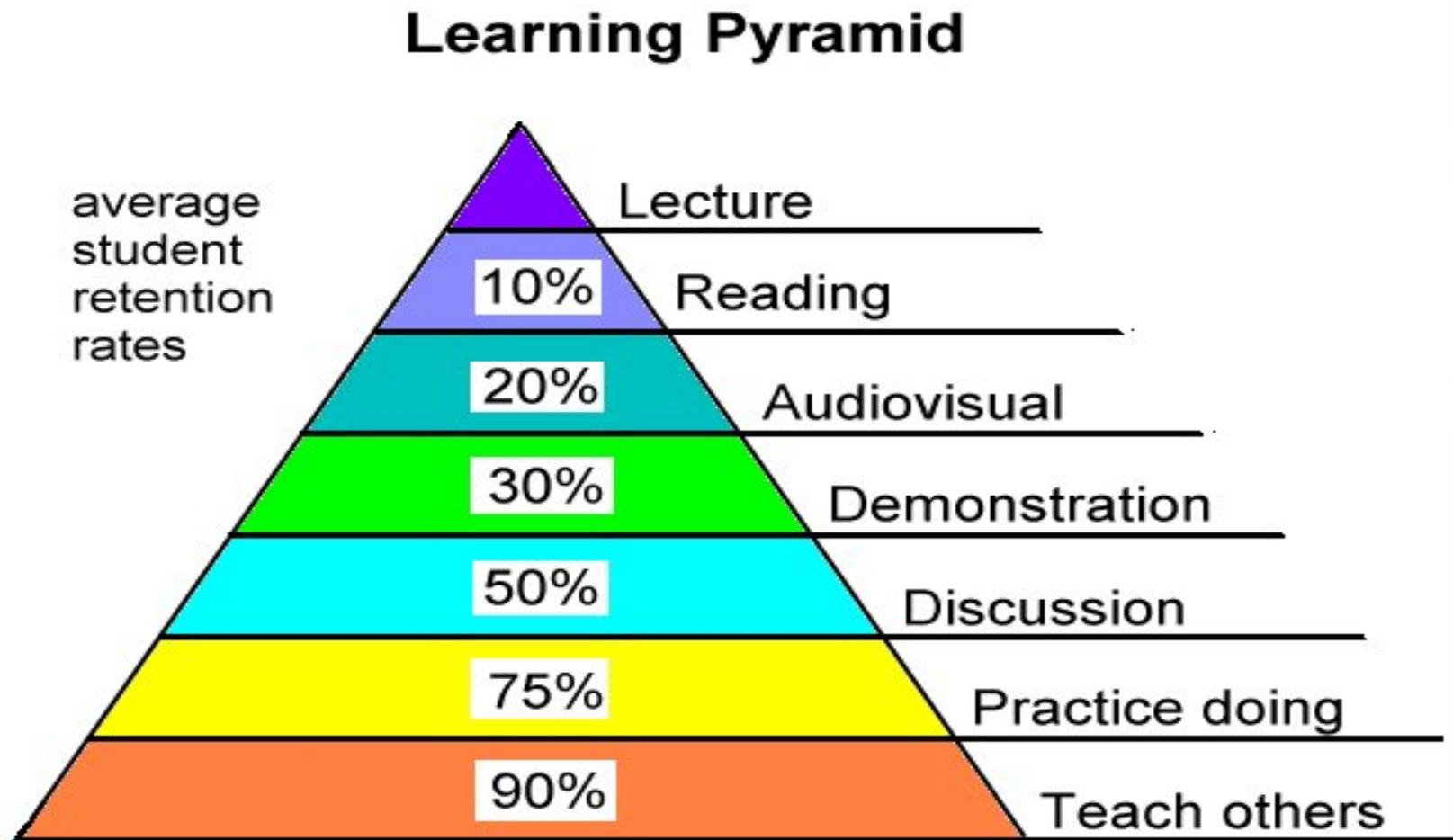
- 1970's-The traditional apprenticeship model based on industry and educational training models
- 1980's- Adult Learning Principles which included taking responsibility for own learning/Life experiences are resources
- 1990's- Experiential Learner or Learning By Doing
- 2000's- Critical Thinking Reasoned and goal directed thinking together with a willingness to challenge underlying values and assumptions
- Citizen rights movements/emancipatory/spirituality/environmental

Educational Theories

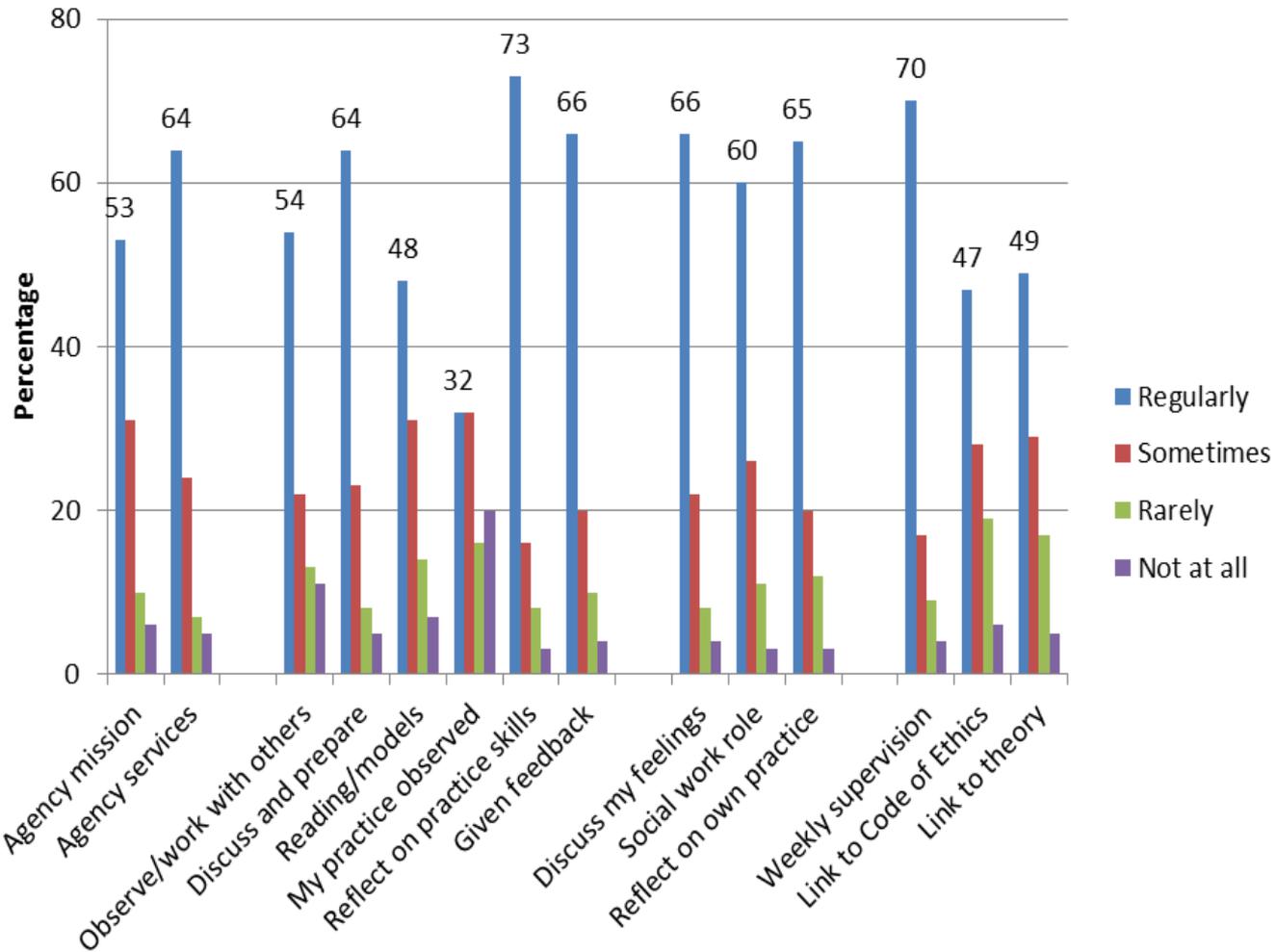
- Graduate attributes
- Lifelong learning
- Reflective practice
- Collegial approach
- World context
- Risk management
- Occupational health and safety

Field Educators (cont.)

Supervisors of social work students undertaking a field placement have a considerable teaching role and as such are referred to as *field educators*.



Source: National Training Laboratories, Bethel, Maine



Government initiatives

- Clinical Schools (HWA)
- Clinical Placements Network (DHS)-11 in Victoria
- In 2014, Victoria introduced a new framework for clinical placement planning that brought together clinical placement providers and education providers to make placement arrangements for the upcoming academic year-nursing but to extend to allied health (viCPlace)
- New models of supervision
- Availability of funding to supervise
- Partnerships and collaboration

The present context

- Health Workforce Australia (HWA)
- Clinical Placements Network (DHS)-11 in Victoria and introduction of viCPlace- a web-based information system that helps Victorian clinical placement providers plan and administer clinical placements with partnered education providers
- Availability of funding to supervise

Issues for teaching and learning

- Push and Pull between keeping professional standards, industry requirements and student needs, eg. RPL
- Students having a narrower placement experience
- Pressure on the agencies to fulfil the placement contracts
- Acceptance of the prevailing ideology and confine themselves to the competent delivery of services may minimize learning to work across a range of contexts, micro-macro which includes a structural understanding of social need and combining service delivery with social action.

CSSW

- The Combined Schools of Social Work started in 1992 to provide joint training of field educators, regular meetings to discuss issues of common concern around fieldwork
- Its first project was a collaborative project to develop a joint database and shared administrative management of placement planning and implementation. This continued until 2010
- In 2006, as a further initiative of this collaborative effort, the CSSW was funded by the Victorian Branch of the AASW (Lyra Taylor Fund) to develop a standardised placement learning and evaluation document that would be used by all agencies supervising social work students across Victoria
- In 2014, the CSSW are going to formally evaluate the workshops as well as undertake a survey of field educators about their experience of providing a placement in the current environment