Common Core 3.0 Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we updating common core?
Stakeholder feedback identified several key concerns about the current common core:

a. Because the current common core is too focused on knowledge based learning and too dense many trainees report feeling that they are not retaining the information presented.
b. The topic based system is too fragmented; new social workers need more help putting these topics together into skill-based social work practice with families.
c. The current common core doesn’t provide the key skill building that new social workers need at the start of their careers.
d. The current common core doesn’t fully integrate many of the recent changes to child welfare practice in California.

How is CC3.0 different from the current Common Core?
Currently, common core content is provided only as classroom modules. It is organized by key topic areas and there is no required sequence. The revision makes three major changes:

a. Reorganizes training around practice areas so that all the concepts included in the content are grounded in practice skills
b. Makes strategic use of online modules to maximize classroom time for skill practice
c. Provides new social workers with opportunities to enhance classroom learning through application of concepts in the field

Beyond re-imagining the way social work practice is presented in core, this concept also seeks to incorporate a wider range of training modalities, including e-learning, classroom learning, coaching, and mentoring. It includes materials to support transfer of learning and to carry the learning experience into the field. The revised core provides a more comprehensive picture of child welfare practice for new social workers; uses field experiences to ground training in actual social work practice; streamlines learning to focus on key knowledge, skills, and values; and uses a variety of training modalities to promote expediency in providing content.

How is CC3.0 coordinated with other ongoing and developing changes to child welfare practice in CA?
There are several key developments underway in California which will impact the CC3.0 content:

a. The California Practice Model
b. The Katie A. Core Practice Model (CPM)
c. California Partners for Permanency (CAPP)
d. Safety Organized Practice (SOP)
e. SDM 3.0

CalSWEC and the RTAs/UCCF are involved with each of these efforts (either as an observer, partner, or driver). This position affords us the necessary vantage point to ensure the curricula we develop over the next two years integrate the changes underway to streamline and improve practice in California. Throughout the content development process thus far we have included key concepts that link the five practice developments above with each other within common core, leading to a training plan that is congruent with and supports these practice changes while still allowing for county and regional differences.
Should we wait until the California Practice Model is solidified to revise core?

Common Core 3.0 development will actually assist the development of the CA Practice Model, since the same synthesis process is necessary for both activities. In addition, child welfare social work practice is constantly evolving as we seek to identify better strategies to serve children and families through evidence-based and evidence-informed practices. Waiting until the current changes to practice are solidified would only result in a new set of variables to manage and monitor – and would cause the Common Core to be outdated.

If multiple agencies are developing the new content, how will we insure that it all works together?

CalSWEC will function as a curriculum coordinator, convening the Content Development Oversight Group (CDOG), a team of project coordinators from the regions. CDOG will review and approve all the learning objectives for the CC3.0 content and will work as a body to ensure content is coordinated and linked. As a final step prior to implementation, CDOG and CalSWEC will review all standardized curricula to ensure congruence.

How will counties and the training system build capacity to support supervisors in the field advisor role?

CalSWEC, the RTAs/UCCF, CWDA and CDSS all recognize that the counties and the training system will need to build capacity to deliver both distance learning and field learning content. We are all working together to identify resources and find creative solutions to build this capacity. Counties will work with their affiliated training organizations to identify field advisors to support trainees in the field activity component of CC3.0. Although supervisors are well-situated to fill this role, depending on local needs counties may identify others as field advisors. For example, in some counties IV-E field instructors may take on the role of CC3.0 field advisor and in other counties coaching support from an external agency may be used to support field activities. CalSWEC and the training academies are developing tools to support field advisors. This includes developing a field guide with descriptions of the field activities and step-by-step instructions for completing them and developing a field advisor curriculum providing an overview of the concepts in CC3.0 and skill-building opportunities in coaching and mentoring. In addition, during implementation, CalSWEC and the training academies will work together to identify additional supports to assist in developing field advisors. A field support curriculum will be part of the Common Core.

How will we track completion of online and field activities?

Tracking completion of field activities will be supported by the RTA and UCCF systems already in place (as with all other aspects of common core). This may require field advisors and trainees to provide information to the RTA or enter information into a learning management system. Online modules will be offered via learning management systems which track successful completion of each module.

Will the online modules include tests to ensure trainees complete them?

Several of the online modules may include pre- and post-tests to evaluate curriculum materials. All online modules will include interspersed quizzes and activities to help engage trainees and monitor comprehension. In addition, the modules will be provided via a learning management system that tracks completion.

Will trainees be able to go back to online modules to access information again?

Each online module will include supporting materials available for download including resource guides, desk guides and full text of the module. Trainees may print these out to use as resources or bookmark them for easy online access. In addition, mobile apps will be available to support many modules including assessment, child development, and interviewing.

How will counties manage sequencing of core while still meeting the need to start new hires as soon as possible?

Although there is an identified sequence for CC3.0, counties and training organizations will still be able to flexibly design a training experience that meets the needs of the individual county. It is recommended that trainees move through the practice areas in order, but if that is not possible, trainees can start with online modules introducing basic concepts and engage in classroom training as it is available.
What can counties do to prepare for the changes in CC3.0?
The best way to prepare for the implementation of CC3.0 is to begin talking to supervisors and other staff about the changes, especially the field component. Explaining the value of the field experience to existing staff and supervisors will help engage them in the process. In addition, many of the practice and concepts included in CC3.0 are included in the Katie A. CPM. Training existing staff and supervisors on the practices identified in the CPM will help prepare them to coach and mentor new trainees.

What can training organizations do to prepare for the changes in CC3.0?
Participating in the development of curricula for CC3.0 and participating in implementation of the Katie A. CPM, CAPP, and SOP will help training organizations prepare for implementation of CC3.0. In addition, training organizations will work together to identify resources for curriculum development and technology.

How much time will it take for trainees to complete CC3.0?
CC3.0 includes 26.5 hours of e-learning content and 18.5 days of classroom training for a total of 23 days. These training days may be completed over the course of 2 years in conjunction with approximately 5 days of field activities.

When will CC3.0 be implemented?
Although the timeline is subject to change based on available resources and resource allocation, we are planning a phased approach that will start with developing the materials identified in the Assessment block. This would mean updating the Child and Youth Development, Assessment, and CMI curricula, including developing the online modules, classroom modules, field guide, and evaluation materials related to assessment over the next year.

Concurrently, but over a longer period of time, additional curriculum development would be ongoing for the other blocks. Using this timeline, phase 1 would be completed in FY 14/15. Phase 2 would begin in FY 13/14 and continue through FY 16/17.

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