RECOMMENDED EDUCATIONAL POLICY CHANGES FOR EPAS 2022
Developed by Joint COEP-COA EPAS 2022 Committee
October 2019

CSWE's Commission on Educational Policy (COEP) is charged with preparing, at periodic intervals not to exceed 7 years, a statement of social work curriculum policy to encourage excellence in educational programs and to be used by the Commission on Accreditation in formulating and revising accreditation standards. The Educational Policy (EP) and the Accreditation Standards (AS) are conceptually linked to each other so a joint EPAS 2022 committee was formed with members from both commissions.

A number of sources have contributed to the following recommended changes to the EPAS 2022 educational policy. For the past two years the Commission on Educational Policy (COEP) has been engaged in environmental scan work with respect to the changes and challenges facing professional social work practice, non-profit service organizations, higher education and social work education. The Commission has been especially cognizant of the importance of ensuring the relevance of the EPAS 2022 through the remainder of the decade and the next EPAS revision in 2029. COEP organized the data into five priority areas to be used in the evaluation of the current EPAS:

1. Technology and Information Literacy
2. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
2. Data Driven Standards
4. Field Education and the Changing Practice Context
5. Changes and Challenges to Higher Education

These priority areas were presented to the CSWE membership for review and discussion during open Connect sessions held at the CSWE Annual Program meeting in 2018. In addition, COEP sought consultation with several other key CSWE Commissions and Councils including the Commission for Diversity and Social and Economic Justice, the Commission on Global Social Work Education, the Commission on Research, and the Commission on Accreditation.

Finally, an EPAS Feedback Survey was developed using the five priority areas as the organizing framework. The survey was sent to the CSWE membership in Spring of 2019. There were 2,827 invitations sent with 586 responses. Program respondents accounted for 236 of the responses with 140 MSW representatives (**52.0% of MSW programs**) and 216 from BSW programs (**41.3% of BSW programs**). The overall response rate, including individual members, was **20.7%**.

In June of 2019, the joint EPAS 2022 committee met to review the work of COEP including the survey findings and discuss recommended changes for the educational policy for EPAS 2022. The current committee members include:

> Commission on Educational Policy (COEP) Representatives: Debra McPhee, Dean, Fordham University, COEP Chair, Nicole Bromfield, University of Houston, Chris Bruhn, Aurora University, Estella Williamson, Seattle University, COFE Chair

> Commission on Accreditation (COA) Representatives: Deana Morrow, West Virginia University, COA Chair, Lisa Clifton, Southeastern University, Michele Hanna, University of Denver, Lynette Reitz, Lock Haven University, Thomas Walsh, Boston College

> Commission on Research (COR) Representative (Advisory): Shari Miller, University of Georgia

> CSWE Staff: Jo Ann Regan, CSWE Vice President of Education, Mary Kurfess, CSWE Director of Social Work Accreditation, Julie Rhoads, CSWE Director of Educational Initiatives & Research

The overall survey findings indicated:
- Most respondents were positive about the impact of the accreditation standards, including diversity, field education, and the administrative standards for faculty and administrative time.
- Deans and directors were more positive about the effects of the standards on the program.
- There was fairly even interest on the inclusion of global perspectives, interdisciplinary and interprofessional perspectives, equity, inclusion and environmental justice in the revision of the EPAS.
- Regarding field education, most respondents responded positively about the potential for changing the traditional structure and allowing students to use paid employment hours.
- However, 80% of respondents said their field structure does not differ from the traditional model.
- Respondents indicated that programs were using technology as a teaching/instructional tool more than preparing students for the information/digital age.

Drawing from the above sources of data, the following chart details specific findings for each of the five priority areas and the recommended changes from EPAS 2015 to EPAS 2022.

TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION LITERACY		
2015 EPAS	**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JOINT COEP-COA COMMITTEE FOR EPAS 2022** (bold and highlighted in paragraph)	**RATIONALE**
Purpose: Social Work Practice, Education, and Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (p.1) The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally.	<u>**Recommendation #1:**</u> **Technology should be incorporated into purpose of social work and proposing the following italicized language be added to the purpose statement of the social work profession:** The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally**. *In the ever-shifting sociotechnical context, social work is agile, responsive, and generative. Social work education prepares students to be critical consumers of technology as well as informed developers of mechanisms to effectively employ and generate human centered technologies to meet the professions mission.***	It is critical that social work education prepare students to flourish as ethical professionals, community members, and leaders in a digital universe and in the knowledge economy. Programs face the challenge of equipping students with the practice skills they need to adapt and thrive as professionals throughout their careers in an advanced technological environment whose contours we cannot yet discern or predict. Survey findings indicate that technology is being used by social work programs in varying degrees. Mostly as teaching tool, less were using it to prepare students for practice. Common theme was lack of training and understanding. Adding it to the educational policy will help to strengthen the importance of technology in social work education and practice and ensure that it is addressed in social work curricula.

2015 EPAS	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JOINT COEP-COA COMMITTEE FOR EPAS 2022	RATIONALE
Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior (p. 7) Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.	<u>Recommendation #2:</u> Modify language of Competency One to focus on preparing students to contribute to the development of technologies for improved practice. Current 2015 language: Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice TO ***Social workers understand how technology provides tools and opportunities to improve practice outcomes and promote social justice when utilized from an ethical social work perspective.***	Add to competency to encourage social work programs to extend beyond preparing students to incorporate more technology in practice to an understanding of 1) how advances in technology continually shape the practice context and 2) how they as professionals can contribute to the development of technologies for the purpose of advancing social work practice.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION		
2015 EPAS	**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JOINT COEP-COA COMMITTEE FOR EPAS 2022**	**RATIONALE**
Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice (p. 7)	**Recommendation #3:** Rename Competency 2 to *Engage Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Practice* and modify Competency 2 description to include equity and inclusion	Survey participants rank-ordered the following that should be added to the Diversity competency: 1. inclusion 2. equity 3. global perspectives 4. environmental justice 5. interprofessional perspectives
Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity.	Social workers understand how diversity, *equity and inclusion* characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the *development* of identity.	Feedback from survey and CSWE Commission on Diversity and Social and Economic Justice recommended using equity and inclusion instead of difference to focus on representation and engagement.
	Recommendation #4: Modify the dimensions of diversity to include nationality.	Survey respondents indicated that diversity educational policy & standards impact learning environment and help to promote inclusive environment so want to keep dimensions of diversity statements. Recommendation to add nationality to list.
The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status.	The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, *nationality*, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status.	

Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers: • apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels; • present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as	**Recommendation #5:** Modify language of Competency 2 to include global interdependence and technology Social workers understand that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, *global interdependence* including social, economic, political, *technological*, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. **Recommendation #6:** Revise Competency 2 behaviors to include the above concepts. •apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity, *equity and inclusion*, in shaping life experiences in *local-global interdependent* practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels; •present themselves as learners *with cultural humility* and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and	Survey findings and feedback from CSWE Commission on Global Social Work Education indicating the importance of incorporating technology and a global perspective across the curriculum, both explicit and implicit, so adding these concepts to Competency 2 description and behaviors.

experts of their own experiences; and • apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies	•apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.	

DATA DRIVEN STANDARDS

2015 EPAS	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JOINT COEP-COA COMMITTEE FOR EPAS 2022	RATIONALE
Educational Policy 3.2—Faculty (p. 16) Faculty qualifications, including experience related to the Social Work Competencies, an appropriate student-faculty ratio, and sufficient faculty to carry out a program's mission and goals, are essential for developing an educational environment that promotes, emulates, and teaches students the knowledge, values, and skills expected of professional social workers. Through their teaching, research, scholarship, and service—as well as their interactions with one another, administration, students, and community—the program's faculty models the behavior and values expected of professional social workers. Programs demonstrate that faculty is qualified to teach the courses to which they are assigned.	<u>Recommendation #7: Revised policy language to:</u> ***Appropriate and qualified faculty representing diverse perspectives are essential for developing an educational environment that promotes, emulates, and teaches students the knowledge, values, and skills expected of professional social workers.*** ***Faculty sufficiency incorporates recognition of essential functions which may include but not limited to: recruitment, enrollment, advising, student engagement, retention, curriculum development, teaching, research, scholarship, mentorship, oversight of student research, assessment, service on institutional or program committees, appropriate class sizes and sufficient course offerings to meet program aims, monitoring and evaluating student progress. Faculty sufficiency includes equitable distribution of faculty across program options relative to program level, number of students, modality and location.*** ***Faculty demonstrate sufficient educational qualifications and experience related to the Social Work Competencies and in those areas that are at the core of the program's mission and goals. Faculty are available to function as appropriate role models for***	Most respondents indicated that data driven standards are very important for program resources. Some respondents felt some of the minimum standards are too low and does not account for differences by respondents' auspice, program level & size so committee worked on revised language in EP to address these concerns. Revised educational policy to focus on sufficiency related to functions of faculty and equitable distribution for all program options rather than just an appropriate student-faculty ratio since there is an absence of evidence-based data in our establishment of requirements such as the appropriate student-faculty ratio.

	students in their learning and socialization into the discipline and profession. Through their teaching, research, scholarship, and service – as well as their interactions with one another, administration, students, and community – the program's faculty models the behavior and values expected of professional social workers within the context of a diversity, equity and inclusion lens. Programs demonstrate that faculty are qualified to teach the courses to which they are assigned.	

2015 EPAS	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JOINT COEP-COA COMMITTEE FOR EPAS 2022	RATIONALE
Educational Policy 3.3— Administrative and Governance Structure Social work faculty and administrators, based on their education, knowledge, and skills, are best suited to make decisions regarding the delivery of social work education. Faculty and administrators exercise autonomy in designing an administrative and leadership structure, developing curriculum, and formulating and implementing policies that support the education of competent social workers. The administrative structure is sufficient to carry out the program's mission and goals. In recognition of the importance of field education as the signature pedagogy, programs must provide an administrative structure and adequate resources for systematically designing, supervising, coordinating, and evaluating field education across all program options**.**	<u>Recommendation #8</u>: Revised policy language to: Social work faculty and administrators, based on their education, knowledge, and skills, are best suited to make decisions regarding the delivery of social work education. Faculty and administrators exercise autonomy in designing an administrative and leadership structure *that models affirmation and respect for diversity, equity and inclusion*, developing curriculum, and formulating and implementing policies that support the education of competent social workers. *Administrative sufficiency includes equitable distribution of resources across program options relative to program level, number of students, modality and location in order to carry out the program's mission and goals. In recognition of the importance of field education as the signature pedagogy, programs must provide an administrative structure for the field program with adequate and equitable resources for systematically designing, supervising, coordinating, and evaluating field education across all program options*<u>.</u>	Revised educational policy to focus on administrative and leadership structure that includes diversity, equity and inclusion concepts as well as giving greater consideration of 'sufficiency of resources' relative to the specific program's context

FIELD EDUCATION AND THE CHANGING PRACTICE CONTEXT

2015 EPAS	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM JOINT COEP-COA COMMITTEE FOR EPAS 2022	RATIONALE
Educational Policy 2.2– Signature Pedagogy: Field Education Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline -- to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work.	<u>**Recommendation #9**</u>: Revised policy language to Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline -- to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. ***The Field Education Director contributes to the curricular administration and governance of the program.***	This change was made due to concerns raised about role of field director and curriculum. This EP change supports the role of the field director in contributing to the curricular administration and governance of the program as part of field education being considered the signature pedagogy.
Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies. Field education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program.	<u>**Recommendation #10**</u>: Revised policy language to: ***Reflecting the changing nature of the practice world, field education programs integrate forms of technology to achieve its field practicum curricular objectives. Field placement requirements and selection are innovative, recognizing student scheduling and financial constraints.***	The educational policy (EP) is being revised to encourage more innovation with field placements given the changing nature of service organizations and the practice sector, as well as the growing tension between the traditional structure of Field Education and the changing needs and challenges for students in the 21st Century.