



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION



COVID-19: One Year Later

Hosted by: the Department of Social Work Accreditation

May 19, 2021 | 1:00-2:00pm ET | Zoom

Purpose & Scope of Webinar

Thank you for taking precious time out of your schedule to join us in this shared learning space. Today, we will focus on:

- The COVID-19 pandemic's impact on accreditation
- Explore frequently asked questions as you navigate and plan for the upcoming semester
- Commission on Accreditation and staff adaptations and flexible options so that we can move forward collectively as fellow social workers and educators
- Minimum compliance accreditation framework vs. peer-networking and sharing best-practices / emerging solutions



Housekeeping



- This slide deck will be available after the session at <https://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/Information/Accreditation-Powerpoints>
- This is an interactive webinar. Here's how to participate:
 - Type your questions in the Q&A section throughout the session
 - Please use the “upvote” feature so we are sure to answer the most popular questions.
 - If you have program-specific questions or wish to seek information beyond the session topic, the program's primary contact may schedule a consultation with the program's specialist
 - We will not be monitoring or integrating chat content into the presentation
 - Consultations are available year-round via e-mail, phone, and Zoom!
- We may not be able to answer all questions that are submitted, so please use our resources as needed to seek answers to your questions
- Future interactive webinar sessions will be communicated to programs as they are scheduled 😊
- We encourage self-care during this session! If you need to take a break, step away, stretch, or get a snack, know that resources will be available post-webinar on the CSWE website.

Agenda

- ❑ **Webinar Topic:** COVID-19: One Year Later
- ❑ Housekeeping & Agenda
- ❑ Meet the Accreditation Team
- ❑ CSWE-COA Response to COVID-19
 - ❑ COA Statement of Trust & Support
 - ❑ Temporary Changes to Delivery Method
 - ❑ Making Permanent Changes to Delivery Method / Offering an Online Program Option
 - ❑ Field Education
 - ❑ Reaffirmation & Candidacy Accreditation Documents
 - ❑ Virtual Reaffirmation and Candidacy Site Visits
- ❑ Pass/Fail Grading
- ❑ Contingency/Continuity Planning
- ❑ Assessment
- ❑ Student Safety & Concerns
- ❑ COVID-19 Continuous u
- ❑ Minimum Compliance Accreditation Framework
- ❑ Peer Networking
- ❑ Collaborating with Staff
- ❑ Site Visitor & Commissioner Volunteer Opportunities
- ❑ 2022 EPAS Update
- ❑ Scenarios
- ❑ Q&A



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Hello.

Department of Social Work Accreditation (DOSWA)

*Meet the accreditation team! We
provide year-round services.*

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COA Statement of Trust & Support

We recognize that this is a stressful time for all stakeholders in higher education. CSWE's priority is the **health and safety** of its program members, volunteers, staff and social work faculty, staff, students, field personnel, and the clients, constituents, and communities they serve daily across the nation. CSWE and the COA **trust** that programs will do, professionally and ethically, what is best for them and their students as they develop contingency/continuity plans. We reiterate our **support and respect** for the **autonomy and diligence** of programs to provide accommodations and flexibility for their students in extenuating circumstances. Staff members are **available to assist** programs as situations arise.

Flexible Options

The next slides share information about the variety of flexible options available to programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

These are options; *not requirements*. Feel free to implement (or not) at your own discretion!

These are temporary options. Planning any permanent changes to your program? Visit policy 1.2.4 Program Changes in the [EPAS Handbook](#).

As always, please direct questions to your program's assigned CSWE staff member / specialist.

Temporary Changes to Delivery Method

- Programs may elect to temporarily offer fully online, hybrid, etc. curricula during the COVID-19 pandemic without obtaining approval from CSWE's COA.
- Temporary changes to delivery method will not impact accreditation status.
- Please do not submit contingency/continuity plans to accreditation staff.
- We reiterate our support and respect for the autonomy and diligence of programs to provide professional and ethical accommodations and flexibility for their students in extenuating circumstances.

Making Permanent Changes to Delivery Method / Offering an Online Program Option

- Permanent changes must be reported per policy 1.2.4 Program Changes in the EPAS Handbook.
- If you wish to offer a permanently online program option, you must submit a substantive change proposal and have it approved by the COA, before it is launched as permanently online
 - Until June 2022, you can offer your program online, but must market it as a campus-based program that is temporarily online, rather than a permanently online program option

Resources for Submitting Substantive Change Report for Permanent Program Changes

- More information on program changes that take place between scheduled accreditation reviews
- Use the Substantive Change Proposal Template to submit your substantive change proposal in order to add a program option (delivery method or location) where 51% or more of your social work curriculum will be offered.
- Programs are required to log their intent to submit a substantive change proposal no later than 30 days before they intend to submit.

Field Education

- Students who have completed 85% of the required placement hours (i.e., 340 hours for baccalaureate programs and 765 hours for master's programs) to a satisfactory level in any terms impacted by COVID-19 may, **at program discretion**, be evaluated as having met the field placement requirements.
- This reduction in field hours may be applied to all field placement courses and all field hours completed in terms until May 31, 2022.
 - New field placement courses that begin after May 31, 2022, will return to the full number of hours required by AS 2.2.5.
- For programs that offer the reduction to students, even though students will be completing a reduced number of field hours during this time, they will be granted the full number of hours for accreditation and graduation purposes.
- Programs cannot waive more than 15% of field hours as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Virtual/remote field activity, as well as field supervision, field seminar hours, and simulations, may temporarily be counted toward the accrual of field hours.

Reaffirmation & Candidacy Accreditation Documents

- All documents submitted for reaffirmation, candidacy, or any other stage of the accreditation process should be submitted based on the program's permanent practices
- If the program has made temporary changes in response to COVID-19 that are different from what is reflected in the program's documents, the program should identify temporary changes in a 1-page cover letter.
- COVID-19 modifications should not be specified anywhere in the document other than the cover letter, unless the changes are intended to be permanent and demonstrate full compliance with the EPAS.

Virtual Visits

Currently approved through February 28, 2022



The process & expectations of all parties during a virtual visit are the same to an in-person visit.



Eliminated areas: Travel accommodations and reimbursement



The visit must occur in real-time, and via a platform that will allow for engaged audio and visual participation.



Visits will occur in one full day OR over two consecutive half-days



Should a technology failure occur that impairs the visitor from fulfilling their duties, the visit may be rescheduled.



The visit report will still be due two weeks after the visit

For more tips, [visit the Virtual Visit Guidelines and Tips resource](#)

Pass/Fail Grading

- Grading scales are entirely the purview of the program.
- Programs are permitted to offer letter grades, pass/fail, qualitative grading, or any other grading structure of their choosing at any time.
- Programs may also temporarily change the grading scale in response to COVID-19
- Since the COA does not have any requirements related to grading scale, these revisions can be continued as long as the program chooses or be made permanent.

Contingency/Continuity Planning

- Recommended to communicate with your state's licensing body to ensure any modifications your program makes will not impact your graduates' ability to obtain licensure.
- Important to ensure any changes made will support students as they transition from a COVID-19 modified participation in the program to permanent operations.
- For students that will be graduating in summer 2022 or later, field hours received in spring 2022 or earlier terms may require only 85% of required hours, while field hours received in the summer of 2022 or later terms require completion of all hours
 - E.g.: A MSW program requires 400 hours in the first year and 500 hours in the second year. If a student completes the first year in 2021-2022, 340 of those 400 hours would be sufficient. However, for the second year 2022-2023, the student is expected to complete the full 500 hours. The total 840 hours completed would be seen as consistent with 900 hours.

Assessment

- Programs are expected to continue collecting regular assessment outcomes.
- Programs may temporarily revise their assessment collection methodology
 - E.g.: course-embedded instruments may be modified to suit online instruments, rather than in-person instruments.
- COVID-19 may be used as a reason for modifying collection methodology or for concerns with assessment outcomes. However, COVID-19 cannot be used as a reason for not collecting regular assessment outcomes.
- This may serve as an impetus for updating and revising assessment plans to suit collecting assessment outcomes online or through other means

Student Safety & Concerns

- Important to follow cues from regional departments of public health to ensure the safety of students and individuals with whom they may interact in field placements.
- May be an impetus for updating policies and procedures for supporting student safety in field placement.
- Programs have discretion to make modifications to field placements and mechanisms for participating in classroom environments for reasons of public health or safety.
- The COA gives programs broad discretion in making modifications to ensure student safety and health is safely met, provided they are able to comply with the EPAS.

COVID-19 Continuous Updates

COA and DOSWA continues to monitor the pandemic and provide guidance and flexibilities as needed / after each COA meeting.

The COA is comprised of your peers who volunteer to oversee accreditation processes.

This is a rapidly evolving situation, for the latest information frequently visit:

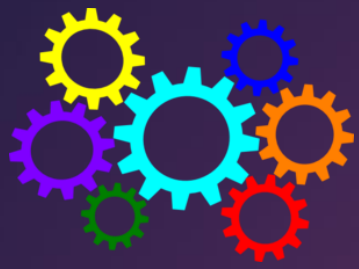
- [Accreditation-specific COVID-19 Info](#)
 - FAQs and Field Guidance
 - Statement from the Commission on Accreditation and the CSWE Accreditation Department
 - Virtual Visits Guidelines & Tips
 - Pulse Survey Findings
 - Crowdsourced Virtual Social Work Field Education Task Ideas and Examples
- [CSWE COVID-19 Response](#)

Minimum Compliance Accreditation Framework

- Minimum compliance accreditation framework
- Programs are expected to maintain compliance with all standards during and in-between review cycles.
- The COA has provided a number of flexible options, especially related to field education and program delivery method, and expiration dates for these flexibilities.
- All other standards must be upheld in order to protect students, faculty, staff, clients and constituents, and the public as well as the quality of the education environment in which we prepare competent social workers.
- We set the floor, programs/institutions set the ceiling.

Peer Networking

- Peer-networking and sharing best-practices / emerging solutions
- Spark and other CSWE resources for peer-sharing
- [Crowdsourced list](#) of virtual/remote field education tasks/activities
- CSWE Spark community discussion board “Responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19)”; account creation and sign-in required
- CSWE Council on Field Education electronic mailing list; e-mail kchapman@cswe.org to be added to this list
- National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work electronic mailing list (for members only)



Collaborating with Staff

- Our team works collaboratively to offer transparent, equitable, and consistent level of service to all stakeholders (COA, programs, students, public, etc.)
- Evolve services in alignment with COA and department goal of a helpful and engaging peer-review process that benefits programs, institutions, faculty, staff, students, communities, and clients/constituents
- Proactive resources to engage in a helpful process

Interested in becoming a CSWE site visitor?

Must be a full- or part-time faculty member at a CSWE-accredited program with at least 3 years of faculty experience.

Contact Megan Fujita, at mfujita@cswe.org to begin the process.



Interested in becoming a Commissioner?

Calls for applications for commissions and councils are sent to all CSWE members each spring. CSWE is actively recruiting commissioners with Spanish fluency.

Composition of the COA shall be consistent with the CSWE affirmative action policy and plan. Applicants must have completed 3 site visits in order to be appointed to the Commission.

Current site visitor and meet the qualifications? Contact Megan Fujita, at mfujita@cswe.org to learn more.

2022 EPAS Update

[Comprehensive information related to 2022 EPAS](#)

[Draft 1 of 2022 EPAS](#)

The online survey is now closed. Thank you to all who provided feedback. Be on the look out for Draft 2 in Fall 2021!

Scenario #1

What happens to students who need technological accommodations for practicum hours after May 31, 2022?

- If a student needs modifications due to a disability, they would work with the institution's disabilities office.
- The current standards have always allowed for virtual placements and alternative media to be utilized in field placements, just not simulations (unrelated to COVID).

Scenario #2

What happens if my academic term ends after May 31, 2022 – am I still eligible for the reduction of hours?

- Field placement courses that started prior to May 31, 2022 but will not end until after that date will also be eligible for the 15% reduction.
- New field placement courses that begin after May 31, 2022, will return to the full number of hours required by AS 2.2.5.

Scenario #3

Many of our students' internship placements aren't letting them come back in-person – how can they get their “in-person” hours?

- At program discretion, remote field activity, field supervision, field seminar hours, and simulations, may be counted toward the accrual of field hours through May 31, 2022. Such activities should be based upon enhancing student social work competence in real or simulated practice settings.
- Field students, whether connected to a field setting or not, should have opportunities for in-person contact with clients and constituencies (which may be facilitated via technology) (AS 2.2.4).
- Please note that there is no specific requirement for number or percentage of hours that may be completed remotely, virtually, through field supervision or seminar, or in simulation.

Scenario #4

Our administration wants our program to be fully online for the next year – is that ok?

- Yes, without impacting accreditation status, programs may elect to temporarily offer fully online, hybrid, etc. curricula during the COVID-19 pandemic without obtaining approval from CSWE's COA.
- Programs may not advertise as online programs during this time that they are offering temporary online curricula.
- If the program is seeking to permanently offer a new online program option, that requires reporting and approval per the Substantive Change process detailed in Section 1.2.4 in the EPAS Handbook.

Q & A

Thank you for submitting your questions in the Q&A feature at the bottom of your screen. Please use the “upvote” feature so we are sure to answer the most popular questions.

Let's Discuss!





Please complete the post-webinar feedback poll to help us improve our offerings 😊

We look forward to engaging with you at our next Accreditation Lunch & Learn!

Please feel empowered to reach out should you have any questions!