

Baccalaureate Evaluative Standards and Interpretive Guidelines

Preamble

The Curriculum Policy Statement and the Eligibility and Evaluative Standards promote quality social work education. They specify the professional content and the educational context which best prepare social work practitioners. The standards define baccalaureate and graduate level knowledge, values, and skills. Content of all areas detailed in the Curriculum Policy Statement must be included in the curriculum and field practicum. Because of the importance that role modeling, field learning, and educational climate play in the preparation of professional social workers, the program must reflect social work values and principles in all aspects of its operation. The program must demonstrate respect for and understanding of social, cultural, and human diversity consistent with the Curriculum Policy Statement.

To obtain accreditation, a program must meet the following evaluative standards. The Commission on Accreditation (hereafter "Commission") reserves the right to initiate a review of an accredited program whenever circumstances indicate questionable compliance with the Evaluative Standards or the Curriculum Policy Statement.

[NOTE: Interpretive Guidelines, in *italics*, follow those standards to which they apply. Interpretive Guidelines explain more fully a standard or its intent. They do not present additional requirements beyond the standards.]

Evaluative Standard 1. Program Rationale and Assessment

- 1.0 The educational program must provide a statement of rationale, including a program mission statement and program goals, consistent with social work's purposes, values, and ethics. The mission and goals are to include quality educational preparation for entry into beginning social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The program's goals must reflect the intent of Curriculum Policy Statement B5.1 to 5.4.5.

Interpretive Guideline 1.0 *The program rationale defines and justifies its purposes and focus, giving meaning to all other aspects of the program. Mission and goal statements are global and general in nature, describing*

desired states or results. Program mission and goals are not limited to the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement, and should dynamically reflect regional and institutional needs, priorities, and interests to have the greatest possible meaning to all program participants.

Goals are more specific than an overriding mission statement in defining program purposes.

- 1.1 Once the mission and goals have been stated, the program must present its objectives, derived from its statement of mission and goals. The program's objectives must reflect the intent of Curriculum Policy Statement B5.7 to 5.7.12.

Interpretive Guideline 1.1 *Objectives are defined as specific, measurable statements of desired achievements. A program could have objectives reflecting design and implementation of the program and reflecting desired program and student achievements. Objectives specify what should happen to students or other target populations or groups as a result of educational and other program actions. They reflect changes in behavior, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, knowledge, or status.*

Achievement of educational objectives requires careful attention to curriculum development to ensure that each objective can be attained as students proceed through the educational process. Student educational outcomes should relate to areas of knowledge or skill that can be measured through instruction-related means. Course and field syllabi should reflect educational objectives. Work-related or educational activities after graduation are examples of subsequent activities of graduates.

Program objectives are not limited to the substance of the Curriculum Policy Statement and should dynamically reflect regional and institutional needs, priorities and interests to have the greatest possible meaning to all program participants. The program may identify other objectives it considers useful, including but not limited to other student learning or activity objectives, program impacts within the institution and community, and faculty impacts on agencies and practice.

- 1.2 The program's rationale, comprised of its statements of mission, goals, and objectives, must be reflected in program implementation.

Interpretive Guideline 1.2 *The program's goals can be implemented by such means as the objectives of curriculum areas, including the field practicum; the objectives of individual courses; faculty assignments and workload; other program initiatives, events, or projects; and the focus and substance of program evaluation activities.*

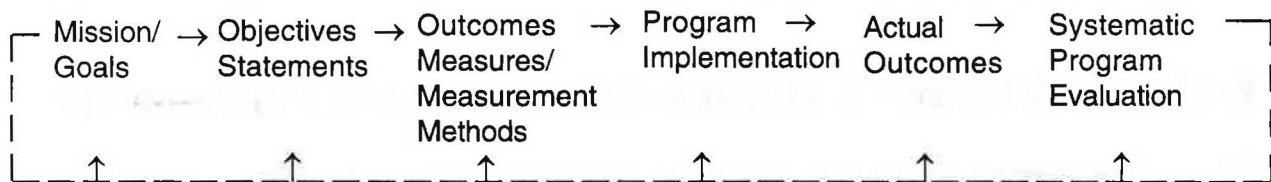
- 1.3 The program must make all faculty members, students, administrators, and each social work professional associated with the program aware of program goals, and objectives. Program documents must reflect these goals and objectives.

Interpretive Guideline 1.3 Programs may use a variety of means to communicate their goals to all persons associated with the program. These include, but are not limited to, institutional catalogs and program documents such as student handbooks and field manuals, orientation sessions and training sessions.

- 1.4 The program must specify the outcome measures and measurement procedures that are to be used systematically in evaluating the program, and that will enable it to determine its success in achieving its desired objectives.

Interpretive Guideline 1.4 The relationships among the key ideas inherent in this standard can be illustrated in the following schema:

Social Work Education Program



The program defines its mission. Subsequently, specific program goals are laid out. Statements of objectives derived from the mission and goals are specified. The measures that will be used to substantiate the degree of achievement of each objective, along with measurement methods (instruments, respondents, data-gathering procedures, statistical procedures, etc.) are stated. The program then is implemented, or operates, until a predetermined point of time (e.g., during a course, at the end of a course, at the end of a year's work, at the end of all course work, at different stages of field practicum, at stated intervals after graduation) at which actual outcomes are evaluated. Findings are used to assess the extent to which objectives have been achieved. The findings are fed back (dotted lines in schema, above) into curriculum or other program revisions, and possibly into revision of goals and objectives.

In assessing attainment of objectives, a variety of sources of information may be used (e.g. students, faculty, employers of graduates, field instructors, clients, consumers, student work products, and other reports or materials).

Programs may use a variety of means to gather data, as suggested by the nature of the objectives themselves. Qualitative and/or quantitative procedures are likely to be of value. Examples may include the following: exit examinations; pre-/post-tests of knowledge and/or skill; employer evalua-

tions; alumni self-reports; student self-reports; faculty achievements; program reputational studies; results of licensing and certification examinations; and student evaluations of courses and instructors' performance.

- 1.5 The program must show evidence that it engages in ongoing, systematic self study and evaluation of its total program, and show evidence that the results of evaluation affect program planning and curriculum design.

Interpretive Guideline 1.5 The program should create and maintain formal means (e.g., committees, procedures, faculty training, reports) to assess all aspects of its operation. Evaluation exists: (1) to determine whether goals are achieved as indicated by actual program outcomes; and (2) to allow corrective action and improvements in program design and activities. Programs should be able to document how the results of program evaluations are used to improve program planning and implementation. Program methods designed to ensure such incorporation, and specific examples of the incorporation of results into program revisions and activities, are useful information.

Evaluative Standard 2. Organization, Governance, and Resources

- 2.0 The program or institution must have policies and practices that assign faculty the rights and responsibilities necessary to achieve high-quality professional education.
- 2.1 The administrative unit of the social work program must have sufficient autonomy to realize the program's goals.

The autonomy of the social work program will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- 2.1.1 The social work program must have an established governance and administrative structure ensuring its authority and responsibility for decision making with respect to goal setting, program planning, and achieving specified goals.
- 2.1.2 The social work program must have its own budget, as well as responsibility for budget development and administration.

Interpretive Guideline 2.1.2 The chief administrator of the social work program should play a central role in developing a proposed budget and presenting it to appropriate authorities, as well as clear responsibility for managing and reporting on that budget during the program's annual operation.

The budget should include faculty resources, travel, supplies, office equipment, and faculty development support.

- 2.1.3 The social work program faculty must have authority to determine program curriculum within the structure of the institution's policies.
- 2.1.4 The faculty and administration of the social work program must participate in formulating policies related to hiring, retention, promotion, and tenure of program personnel; and have the authority to recruit, retain or terminate; and to tenure, promote, assign, develop and evaluate social work faculty.
- 2.1.5 The social work program must be assigned an administrative support staff that is demonstrably adequate to ensure achievement of program goals.

Interpretive Guideline 2.1.5 Heavy demands are placed on professional support staff in a social work education program — continuing communication with students, faculty, program administration, field practicum agencies, and the social work community. Professional staff support of at least one full-time professional support staff member is recommended.

Programs should document that the combination of professional support staff and other human and machine resources is adequate to meet demands in all areas of program functioning, effectively supporting achievement of program goals.

- 2.1.6 The social work program must have sufficient jurisdiction over physical space to realize program goals. This includes classroom space, private faculty offices and office space for administrative and clerical workers, and space for student and faculty meetings and for student socialization.
- 2.2 The program's chief administrator must give educational and administrative direction to the program, and have demonstrated leadership ability through academic and other experience in the field of social work. The educational credentials of individuals in this role must include a master's degree from an accredited program in social work. A program chief administrator who holds a baccalaureate degree in social work but not a master's degree in this field must also hold a doctoral degree in social work. The chief administrator must have no less than 25% release time over the full academic year for carrying out these administrative duties. The program must give evidence of continuity in compensated coverage of these duties over the summer.

Interpretive Guideline 2.2 The program chief administrator's credentials, experience and expertise in teaching and in educational program administration at the undergraduate level should be an important consideration in hiring. Experience has shown that continuity of leadership is important for professional programs, and at least 25% of the program chief administrator's workload over the calendar year — and often much more than that depending on the size and complexity of the program — is needed to effectively administer an accredited program.

- 2.3 The program's budgetary allocation from the educational institution must be sufficient to carry out the program's specified goals.

- 2.3.1 The allocation must be stable enough to permit program planning and implementation by faculty and administration.
- 2.3.2 The administration of the institution and the program must provide the necessary equipment for attaining the program's goals.
- 2.3.3 The administration of the institution and the program must provide the library holdings and other educational resources necessary for attaining the program's goals.

Evaluative Standard 3. Nondiscrimination and Human Diversity

- 3.0 The program must make specific, continuous efforts to provide a learning context in which understanding and respect for diversity (including age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation) are practiced.

Interpretive Guideline 3.0 *Social work education builds upon professional purposes and values; therefore, programs must provide a context for learning that is nondiscriminatory and that reflects the profession's fundamental tenets. Programs should describe how their learning context and educational program and curriculum (such as faculty, staff, and student composition; selection of agencies and their clientele as practicum settings; composition of program advisory and/or field committees; resource allocation; program leadership; speakers series, seminars, and special programs; research and other initiatives) model understanding of and respect for diversity.*

Evaluative Standard 4. Faculty

- 4.0 The program must have full-time faculty adequate in number, qualifications, competence, and range of expertise to achieve its specified goals.

Interpretive Guideline 4.0 *Range of expertise is based on educational background, teaching and educational administrative experience, and experience in professional practice. Faculty size and composition should be commensurate with the number and type of curricular offerings in class and field, the number of students served, and the faculty's educational responsibilities and services.*

It is recommended that the program maintain a ratio of no less than one full-time equivalent faculty per 25 full-time equivalent students.

Faculty experience and expertise in teaching and in undergraduate program administration should be an important consideration in hiring. Faculty members' experience in professional social work practice should be consonant with the special emphasis of baccalaureate programs on preparing students for generalist practice. For faculty teaching social work practice,

qualifications should include expertise in the particular area of teaching responsibility. (See Curriculum Policy Statement B6.9-6.10.)

Faculty responsibilities include classroom instruction and field liaison; professional advising; planning, implementing, and evaluating the program; and continuing professional development as a teacher-scholar. Faculty members are expected to participate in other professional activities and to undertake community responsibilities essential to the attainment of the program's goals.

- 4.1 The baccalaureate social work education program must have a minimum of two faculty members with master's degrees in social work. They are to have full-time appointments in the institution and be assigned full time to the social work program.

Interpretive Guideline 4.1 *The full-time assignment to the social work program is evaluated by reviewing teaching assignments and participation in curriculum development, student advisement, administrative assignments, and field liaison related to the baccalaureate program.*

Programs which inadvertently fall below this minimum of two full-time faculty — through illness, resignation, etc. — should immediately contact the director of the Council's Division of Standards and Accreditation to confer on how to maintain candidacy or accredited status.

In combined programs, the baccalaureate program should have a minimum of two full-time faculty members, one designated as the full-time director (see Eligibility Standard 6), plus another full-time assigned faculty member or an additional full-time equivalent faculty member, as a minimum. The program should have sufficient, continuous and stable faculty resources which enable it to achieve its specified goals

For combined programs, the baccalaureate program may have a minimum of one full time faculty member designated as the director (see Eligibility Standard 6), and a minimum of an additional full time equivalent faculty member. The program should have sufficient, continuous, stable faculty resources to achieve its specified goals.

- 4.2 Responsibility for providing educational experiences must be vested in a full-time, experienced, knowledgeable faculty who identify with the profession of social work. There must be sufficient continuity in the assignment of a core of full-time faculty who hold master's degrees in social work to ensure the stability of the program's essential functions. Part-time and adjunct faculty may provide flexibility and breadth to the program as a supplement to full-time faculty.
- 4.3 Faculty who teach required courses on social work practice or coordinate field instruction must hold a master's degree in social work from an accredited program with the equivalent of two years or more of full-time post-master's-degree experience in professional social work practice.

Interpretive Guideline 4.3 Any faculty member teaching a required practice course in the social work foundation, or serving as fieldwork coordinator or director, must meet these requirements. Programs should designate which courses are practice courses required of all majors for graduation.

Programs that have attained candidacy status or become accredited may apply for exceptions to this standard for their full-time or part-time faculty. For procedures to apply for an exception to this standard, see the "Interpretation and Guidelines for Faculty Teaching Practice or Coordinating Field Practicum" on pages 206-209 of the Handbook.

- 4.4 The responsibilities of the core of full-time faculty must include ongoing oversight of the curriculum, including the design, modification, approval, implementation, and evaluation of the program's curriculum and educational policies; systematic and continuous evaluation of program outcomes in the light of the program's specified goals; teaching of practice and other social work courses; coordination of field instruction; and maintenance of program integrity.
- 4.5 In determining faculty assignments, workload credit must be given for the time needed to advise students, to select and evaluate field instruction settings, to provide liaison between field settings and students, to evaluate student performance, to perform administrative tasks, to conduct scholarship, to discharge community obligations related to the purposes of the program, to participate in activities of professional organizations, and to engage in professional development activities. The program is to provide the time necessary to engage in research, publication, and other scholarly production.

The coordinator of field instruction must have a full-time appointment with no less than 25% release time over the full academic year for that position. The program must give evidence of continuity in compensated coverage of these duties over the summer.

Interpretive Guideline 4.5 Workloads should provide time to meet the expectations the standard describes. Social work faculty are held accountable for being productive scholars. Scholarship is defined broadly to allow faculty to engage in: (1) the discovery of knowledge in chosen fields of expertise through original research; (2) the integration of knowledge in chosen fields of expertise (through replications, integrative analyses, interdisciplinary linking, and similar activities); (3) the application of knowledge to human problems (through service projects demonstrably linked to teaching and research, technical assistance or consultations to human service organizations and other entities, policy analyses, program and practice evaluations); or (4) the documented application of scholarly endeavor to teaching (by wide reading and constant updating of knowledge of the field, as well as by examining and revising pedagogical methods and materials).

A program should designate a field instruction coordinator with clear authority and responsibility for ongoing field administration. Beyond the minimum of 25% release time for field administration duties for field instruction coordi-

nation, programs should assign proportionally more time for serving larger numbers of students.

Evaluative Standard 5. Student Development

- 5.0 The program must clearly articulate and implement criteria and processes of student admission.

Interpretive Guideline 5.0 *Criteria and processes of admission should be designed and implemented to accept from the group of applicants those who, in accordance with the program's educational goals, are best qualified to become professional social workers at a beginning level of practice.*

Responsibility for student selection should be assigned to persons designated by the program, and admissions standards and processes should reflect an appreciation for the requirements of the profession and of professional social work education. Such standards and processes should be made known publicly, to applicants and others.

- 5.1 The program must have written policies and procedures concerning the transfer of credit and the use of proficiency examinations. Such policies and procedures are to avoid redundancy, promote program integrity, and contribute to relevant undergraduate education for students. Field practicum courses may not be transferred from an unaccredited to an accredited program.

Interpretive Guideline 5.1 *In considering academic credit for students transferring from other accredited social work programs, the program should prevent duplication of academic content by recognizing prior educational achievement, but also ensure student outcomes consonant with program goals.*

Social work programs that are not accredited cannot provide a reliable, third-party assurance that they meet or exceed minimum standards. Thus, students transferring from such programs present a special problem in gaining acceptance to the program and transferring academic credits. If such students are admitted to an accredited program, the program should take responsibility for ensuring that the courses being transferred are compatible with relevant evaluative standards and the Curriculum Policy Statement.

The program is also responsible for validating academic credits previously earned. It should define the means whereby students qualify for academic credit for transferred courses. It should have a formalized mechanism to determine whether the content and objectives of courses taken in the unaccredited program are substantially equivalent to the academic content offered in its own curriculum. Faculty should evaluate the course syllabi including course objectives, content outline, learning activities, theoretical frames of reference, and bibliographies of courses considered for transfer.

If comprehensive syllabi are not available or if the program prefers, proficiency examinations may be used. If the program adopts some plan of evaluation on a student-by-student, course-by-course basis, the self-study should explain the evaluation criteria and methods used.

- 5.2 Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience must not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of courses in the professional foundation areas specified in the Curriculum Policy Statement. (See Curriculum Policy Statement B6.3 to 6.13). Statements of this policy are to appear in formal program documents.
- 5.3 The program's advisement policies and procedures must be clearly specified and made known to both program faculty and students.
- 5.4 Professional social work advisement must be carried out by full-time or permanent faculty whose educational credentials include either a master's degree in social work or a baccalaureate degree in social work plus a social work doctorate. Advisors must be fully knowledgeable about the baccalaureate program.

Interpretive Guideline 5.4 *Programs should ensure that faculty are accessible on a continuing basis for student advising, and that advisers are fully knowledgeable about the program and institution. Full-time faculty and part-time faculty with continuous appointments to the program could meet these criteria.*

- 5.5 Professional social work advisement must orient students and assist them in assessing their aptitude and motivation for a social work career, allow for early and periodic evaluation of each student's performance, guide students in selecting areas of coursework, and assess with students the field settings that best meet their educational needs and career goals.
- 5.6 The program must have policies and practices that specify students' rights and responsibilities. Consistent with the policies of the institution, the program must enable students to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs.

Interpretive Guideline 5.6 *Students should have copies of program and institutional policies available to them in a designated place.*

- 5.7 The program must provide opportunities for students to organize in their interests as students and encourage such organization.
- 5.8 The program must make explicit the criteria for evaluating students' academic and field performance. The program's policies and practices must include procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work program for reasons of academic and nonacademic performance.

Interpretive Guideline 5.8 *In developing a student termination policy, the program should consider both academic performance and nonacademic performance or behaviors of students that provide relevant information*

regarding their likely performance as social work practitioners. The program's responsibilities to its students and to potential clients/consumers and the field of practice should be balanced in its student termination policy and procedures. These program policies and procedures should reflect the special circumstances of social work but also be consistent with institutional policies and procedures.

Evaluative Standard 6. Curriculum

- 6.0 The program's goals, objectives and curriculum must be consistent with the Curriculum Policy Statement for baccalaureate social work education.
- 6.1 The baccalaureate curriculum must be developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole. All program components, including part-time and off-campus, are to provide an equal quality of education.

Interpretive Guideline 6.1 *Every aspect of the curriculum should reflect the program's goals and objectives. The goals and objectives provide the overarching framework from which the entire curriculum derives. Curriculum coherence should be developed both horizontally and vertically, e.g., across an entire year's curriculum; between courses in curriculum areas; between different sections of the same course; within any given course. Individual courses should demonstrate coherence among course objectives, course outlines, texts, required and supplemental readings, assignments, and bibliography.*

Continuing faculty attention should be given to curriculum development. The curriculum should be reviewed regularly in the light of actual student outcomes, new knowledge, and the demands of the profession and practice. Modifications should be made as needed on the basis of such reviews. The means used by the program to implement ongoing curriculum development should be formalized.

- 6.2 The baccalaureate curriculum prepares students for generalist social work practice; it is based upon a liberal arts perspective and must include the professional foundation.

Interpretive Guideline 6.2 *The program should define its conceptions of generalist social work practice and of the liberal arts perspective its students are to attain, and explain the relationship of generalist practice to the liberal arts perspective. Liberal arts content areas are considered essential knowledge components for social work professional foundation course work. The educational plan developed for the student should reflect the required components specified in the Curriculum Policy Statement and ensure acquisition of the liberal arts perspective.*

The specific liberal arts content that is needed to underpin the social work professional foundation is left to the discretion of the program, within the

guidelines of baccalaureate Curriculum Policy Statement B5.8 and B5.9, but should be defined by the program. Definition involves identifying specific content of liberal arts courses that is prerequisite for specific content in the social work foundation, documenting the appropriateness of the liberal arts content it selects for the program, and then identifying the liberal arts courses that present the required content. Programs should develop mechanisms to ensure that the required liberal arts content has been attained. Examples of useful mechanisms are the enforced sequencing of course work through the use of prerequisites and the incorporation of specified liberal arts course work in admissions or screening procedures.

Curriculum Policy Statement B6.5-B6.16 discusses the baccalaureate degree curriculum content, and require that programs clearly explicate how content on values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum constitute the professional foundation.

- 6.3 The methods of instruction must reflect the cognitive, affective, and experiential components of learning appropriate to the attainment of the program's specified goals. Instructional methods are to involve students in their learning.

Interpretive Guideline 6.3 *The Commission on Accreditation does not prescribe specific educational methods, but is concerned that methods support the cognitive, affective and experiential components of learning appropriate to the specific course, to the program's goals, and to adequate evaluation of educational objectives. The program should demonstrate that its teaching methods permit appropriate synthesis, application, and demonstration of attainment of content in all its curriculum offerings, including those for part-time, weekend, and off-campus students. Equal quality of the educational methods used in all program components for given areas of content should be demonstrated.*

- 6.4 The program is responsible for providing a clearly designed field practicum for all students including standards for selecting agencies, selecting field instructors with an accredited baccalaureate or master's degree in social work, and evaluating student learning in the practicum.

Interpretive Guideline 6.4 *The program should exercise responsibility for the administration of the field practicum, ensuring planned cooperation and coordination between a program and the agencies it selects for the field placement of students. A program should designate a field coordinator with clear authority and responsibility for ongoing field administration.*

The program's administrative responsibility should include preparation of a field manual stating field policy and procedures, the objectives of this area of curriculum, and description of the responsibilities of program and agency representatives and students.

The program should articulate the standards it requires to qualify agencies for student field placements. The student's field practicum agency should be evaluated in terms of its consonance with the program's mission, goals, and objectives; its appropriateness for specific learning experiences; its ability to provide educationally directed field instruction; and its clear articulation of student learning in tasks assigned.

If the student is also employed in the agency where the field practicum takes place, the availability of release time for course and field instruction should be ensured. Student assignments and fieldwork supervision should differ from those associated with the student's employment. It should also be demonstrated that there is no diminution of the program's established requirements in class and field practicum and that field instruction is educationally focused rather than solely centered on agency services. As one means of ensuring equal educational opportunity for all students, the field practicum should be administered in accordance with the pattern the program establishes for all students. Agencies involved in this type of field placement should meet the same criteria as other field agencies.

The program should identify the credentials it requires to qualify field instructors, and the credentials should be compatible with program goals. Assessment of a field instructor's qualifications should take into account the individual's professional education, commitment to the values of the social work profession, competence in practice, and interest in supporting student education. A basic requirement for assuming field instruction responsibilities is the agency's adjustment of the individual staff member's work assignments to permit adequate time to develop and implement the student's field practicum. The field practicum plan should give the student regular access to the field instructor.

In those exceptional cases where the field instructor does not hold a social work degree, the social work program faculty should assume responsibility for identifying the specific areas that will require additional faculty involvement to ensure that a social work focus and identification are sustained, and for providing whatever involvement is judged necessary to achieve this objective. The program should be accountable for carrying out this responsibility. Faculty involvement includes frequent and sustained liaison visits to the agency to coordinate and monitor field learning assignments.

The program should articulate detailed criteria for assessing student progress, and for developing and maintaining structured means for evaluating student learning and performance in the field practicum. Field instructors and students should be fully informed of the criteria and means for assessing student progress; these may be disseminated in a field manual, program handbook, or other documents.

- 6.5 Programs must establish and maintain close reciprocal and ongoing relationships with the social work practice community as part of the process of continuous evaluation of curriculum.

Interpretive Guideline 6.5 The program should initiate and maintain regular planned exchanges among the program, representatives of field practicum agencies, and other social work practitioners regarding the program's educational goals and objectives, curriculum, student performance, and developments in the field setting that affect student learning. The program should also systematically provide for the participation of field instructors and other social work practitioners in curriculum assessment leading to curriculum revision and development.

- 6.6 Only those students who are candidates for the baccalaureate degree in social work may be admitted to the field practicum.

Interpretive Guideline 6.6 This standard refers only to required field practicum courses that meet the requirement for a minimum of 400 clock hours in student field placement. It does not include observational or volunteer opportunities incorporated into other courses in the program.

- 6.7 Enrollment in social work practice courses beyond the pre-practice or introductory level must generally be restricted to social work majors. Non-majors must have completed the defined prerequisites before entering social work practice courses beyond the prepractice or introductory level.

Interpretive Guideline 6.7 In the event that non-social work majors are enrolled in practice courses beyond the introductory level, the program should provide evidence that: the integrity of the planned relationship between field and practice content is not impeded; the inclusion of non-majors does not interfere with social work majors' achievement of educational outcomes; and the inclusion of non-majors does not place a burden on program faculty and other resources. The program should report the number and percentage of non-social work majors in practice classes.

Evaluative Standard 7. Alternative Programs

- 7.0 Alternative programs introduce change into one or more components of a program already accredited by the Commission. If such alterations do not constitute substantive changes, the program must, as part of the self-study process when submitting materials for accreditation, include information about the alternative program and its evaluation results.

If an alternative program involves substantive change, the program is to submit a proposal for the Commission's approval before implementing the alternative program.

Interpretive Guideline 7.0 Although the traditional full-time, on-campus program remains the basic structure for baccalaureate degree programs in social work, programs may also offer a multiplicity of educational alternatives, including off-campus arrangements, second baccalaureate degree programs, and collaborative arrangements among more than one educational institution. Differences in design or delivery components include those relating to geographic location, time factors, curriculum structure and

content, instructional methods, governance, and resources. Although the overall mission and goals may be the same, the student population for whom they are developed, the curriculum emphasis, or the educational approach often vary to the extent that they constitute substantive changes. Substantive changes are consistent with curriculum policy and accreditation standards, but do not coincide with the design of the accredited program in one or more ways.

Relating these programs and their component parts to the accreditation standards involves interpretation, elaboration, and reporting beyond procedures required for more traditional arrangements.

In reviewing materials concerning an alternative program, the Commission may request additional information, especially if the alternative program involves substantive change or seems to fall outside curriculum policies or accrediting standards and thus constitutes an experimental program. Questions about whether a program or portion of a program falls outside curriculum policies or accrediting standards should be referred to the director of the Division of Standards and Accreditation.

- 7.1 An alternative program that offers the equivalent of one or more academic years of the social work degree program, whether the class or field curriculum or both, in an off-campus location must submit a proposal to the Commission on Accreditation for approval before implementing the program.

Interpretive Guideline 7.1 *Even when an alternative program is exactly modeled on the main-campus program, if it offers the equivalent in credits of one year or more of course work in an off-campus location it should submit a proposal for approval from the Commission prior to implementation.*

- 7.2 An alternative program that involves collaborative arrangements between two or more educational institutions must submit a proposal to the Commission on Accreditation for approval before implementing the collaborative program.

Interpretive Guideline 7.2 *Although collaborative arrangements are not accredited as such, the same standards that apply to individual programs apply to the evaluation of collaborative arrangements. This permits the Commission to evaluate the structure through which participating programs pool their resources. If a participant in a collaborative is able to meet a specific standard only by virtue of the resources of the collaborative, the combined resources of the collaborative should equal or exceed those that the accreditation standards would normally require of the participating programs evaluated individually. At the same time, a collaborative cannot be evaluated simply by adding up the resources of its parts; rather, it is imperative to monitor the ways in which the total resources are effectively interrelated and used by the individual programs.*

Because of great differences in organizational structure and institutional auspices among programs participating in collaborative arrangements, each collaborating educational institution should submit a separate applica-

tion for the Council accreditation. However, all the participants in a collaborative arrangement should submit their applications simultaneously.

- 7.3 The alternative program proposal must include a detailed plan that presents the rationale and goals of the program and elaborates on the curriculum content and objectives. The program must document the equal quality of its alternative programs relative to its standard program. (See Evaluative Standard 6.1.) A design for evaluating the outcomes of the program must be included. (See Evaluative Standards 1.4-1.5.).

Interpretive Guideline 7.3 *The program should have an evaluation design for assessing the outcomes of the alternative program, and for contrasting these outcomes with those of the standard program. The plan for evaluation should follow accepted protocols of evaluation research. The evaluation plan should be presented in sufficient detail to enable the Commission to determine the validity of the evaluation design in relation to the identified goals and objectives. (See the Baccalaureate Self-Study Guide pp. 105-114 of this Handbook for further details on developing an alternative program proposal).*

Evaluative Standard 8. Innovative Programs

The Commission on Accreditation is committed to nurturing innovations in social work education and to supporting new and creative ideas. The Commission shares the excitement of the innovator and welcomes the review of innovative proposals.

An innovation, whether a totally new conceptualization or a “re-visiting” of an old idea that was abandoned, represents a creative breakthrough in content or established patterns of program design or delivery. An innovation may be proposed for any aspect of a social work program, such as, major curriculum modifications; alterations in resource configurations (e.g., collaborative, interdisciplinary, etc.); alternative program structures; or some other change that is undertaken to test, expand, or improve social work education. This standard seeks to provide latitude for programs to design and operationalize new ways of educating social work professionals. Innovative programs are distinguished from alternative programs by virtue of the fact that they propose to depart from one or more accreditation standards.

The Commission on Accreditation recognizes that no innovation is a “finished product”, that innovations are dynamic and that the goals of an innovation are likely to evolve as the program proceeds with its work and takes into account feedback from various sources. To accommodate for this evolution, the accreditation cycle for programs testing a proposed innovation will be eight years and will include the Commission’s assessment during the cycle, at which time the incorporation of changes and refinements resulting from the evolving nature of the innovation can be incorporated.

This standard is intended to help programs address basic areas in the conceptualization of innovations. It is intended to support change while retaining the public trust, encouraging responsibility as changes are made, and providing assurance to consumers, be they students or clients, that the innovation will not jeopardize the quality of social work education.

- 8.0 A proposal for innovation must be submitted to the Commission on Accreditation for approval prior to implementation. The proposal is to identify explicitly the standard or standards to be modified by the program and/or from which the program will depart, and for which the Commission's approval is sought.
- 8.1 A proposal for innovation must emanate from an accredited program and be directed to a degree program at the same level.
- 8.2 A proposal for innovation must include: a) a design for evaluating the effects of the innovation at specified points during and at the end of the implementation period; b) criteria for evaluating positive and negative outcomes of the innovation; c) a plan for potential incorporation of the innovation at the end of the experimental period; and d) a plan for student degree completion if the innovation is discontinued.
- 8.3 A proposal for innovation must describe the mission, rationale, implementation, and plans for assessment of the proposed change.

Interpretive Guideline 8.3 The following is a suggested proposal outline:

1. **Conceptualization of the proposed innovation:** *How is the innovation related to the mission of the established program? How is the proposed program innovative? What linkages exist between the established program and the proposed innovation? How, if at all, will the established program be affected by the innovation? How are the established program's resources augmented for the innovative program?*
 2. **Goals and objectives:** *What are short-term and long-term goals? What procedures will be prepared for modifying goals during the implementation of the innovation?*
 3. **Content:** *What will be the effect of the innovation on student learning? How will the innovation affect the established program's organization of knowledge, values and skills content?*
 4. **Implementation:** *How will the change be phased in and out according to student cohorts? How will the program guarantee class completion of academic requirements? How will the program organize learning processes? How will the program teach its conceptualization of practice? How will students be notified about the implications of the innovation? What resources, including human resources, will be required?*
 5. **Evaluation:** *How will the program measure achievement of goals of the innovation? How will the program determine whether the innovation will be retained in the established program? If the innovation is terminated, what steps will be taken?*
 6. **Professional Contributions:** *How will the program share information about the innovation with the academic and professional community?*
- 8.4 A proposal for innovation must describe the relevance of the proposed innovation to the mission of the profession; the relationship to the values and ethics of the profession; and the responsiveness to the contextual conditions and societal needs.

Curriculum Policy Statement for Baccalaureate Degree Programs in Social Work Education

B1.0 Scope and Intent of the Curriculum Policy Statement

- B1.1 This document sets forth the official curriculum policy for the accreditation of baccalaureate (BSW) programs of social work education by the Council on Social Work Education. It supersedes all prior statements of curriculum policy for the baccalaureate program level.
- B1.2 The Curriculum Policy Statement establishes mandates for minimum requirements for the curricula of baccalaureate programs to be accredited by the Council. The policy statement specifies certain content areas and requires that they be logically related to each other, to the purposes and values of social work set forth in this document, and to the purposes, mission, resources, and educational context of each professional program. The statement does not prescribe any particular curriculum design.
- B1.3 Each program is responsible for making every faculty member, student, field instructor, and administrator associated with the program aware of the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement.

B2.0 Relationship to Accreditation Standards

- B2.1 The Commission on Accreditation of the Council develops standards by which social work education programs are evaluated for accreditation. These standards pertain to the organization, administration, and curriculum implementation of programs of social work education. Curriculum standards are derived from and must conform with this Curriculum Policy Statement.

B3.0 Premises Underlying Social Work Education

- B3.1 The purpose of social work education is to prepare competent, effective social work professionals who are committed to practice that includes services to the poor and oppressed, and who work to alleviate poverty, oppression, and discrimination.
- B3.2 Social work education is based upon a specific body of knowledge, values, and professional skills. It is grounded in the profession's history and philosophy. Education for the profession promotes the development and advancement of knowledge, practice skills, and services that further the well-being of people and promote social and economic justice. Social work education is responsible for the production and application of research and scholarship aimed at advancing social work practice.

- B3.3 Programs of social work education are offered at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. Doctoral programs are not accredited by the Council.
- B3.4 Programs of social work education maintain close, reciprocal, and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners and with groups and organizations that promote, provide, or seek to influence social policies and social work services. Responsibility for initiating these relationships rests with social work education programs. Effective programs develop and maintain systematic communication with these individuals and groups.
- B3.5 The effectiveness of any profession depends on the active engagement of its members in continuous learning. Programs of social work education strive to promote continuing professional development of students and faculty. Programs seek to teach students how to become lifelong learners who are motivated to continue developing new knowledge and skills throughout their careers.
- B3.6 Effective social work education programs recognize the interdependence of nations and the need for worldwide professional cooperation.
- B3.7 Social work education programs assume a leadership role within the profession by offering curricula that are at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and its supporting disciplines.

B4.0 Purpose of Social Work

- B4.1 The profession of social work is committed to the enhancement of human well-being and to the alleviation of poverty and oppression. The social work profession receives its sanction from public and private auspices and is the primary profession in the provision of social services. Within its general scope of concern, professional social work is practiced in a wide variety of settings. It has four related purposes:
- B4.1.1 The promotion, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of the functioning of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by helping them to accomplish tasks, prevent and alleviate distress, and use resources.
- B4.1.2 The planning, formulation, and implementation of social policies, services, resources, and programs needed to meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities.
- B4.1.3 The pursuit of policies, services, resources, and programs through organizational or administrative advocacy and social or political action, to empower groups at risk and to promote social and economic justice.
- B4.1.4 The development and testing of professional knowledge and skills related to these purposes.

B5.0 Purpose and Structure of Baccalaureate Social Work Education

B5.1 The purpose of professional social work education is to enable students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession into competent practice. The achievement of this purpose requires clarity about learning objectives and expected student outcomes, flexibility in programming and teaching to accommodate a diverse student population, and commitment of sufficient time and resources to their education.

B5.2 Two levels of social work education are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education: the baccalaureate and the master's. The baccalaureate level prepares students for generalist social work practice, and the master's level prepares students for advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. These levels of education differ from each other in the depth, breadth, and specificity of knowledge and skill that students are expected to synthesize and apply in practice.

Both levels of social work education must provide a professional foundation curriculum that contains the common body of the profession's knowledge, values, and skills. This common base is transferable among settings, population groups, and problem areas. The baccalaureate level of social work education must include a liberal arts perspective and the professional foundation content, which prepares students for direct services with client systems of various sizes and types.

B5.3 Professional social work education at the baccalaureate level takes place in accredited baccalaureate degree-granting colleges and universities.

B5.4 All baccalaureate social work programs must:

B5.4.1 Provide content about social work practice with client systems of various sizes and types.

B5.4.2 Prepare graduates to practice with diverse populations.

B5.4.3 Provide content about the social contexts of social work practice, the changing nature of those contexts, the behavior of organizations, and the dynamics of change.

B5.4.4 Infuse throughout the curriculum the values and ethics that guide professional social workers in their practice.

B5.4.5 Prepare graduates who are aware of their responsibility to continue their professional growth and development.

B5.5 The baccalaureate curriculum must be based upon a liberal arts perspective and must include the professional foundation.

B5.6 The baccalaureate curriculum must be developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole.

- B5.7 Graduates of a baccalaureate social work program will be able to:
- B5.7.1 Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
 - B5.7.2 Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of diversity.
 - B5.7.3 Demonstrate the professional use of self.
 - B5.7.4 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the strategies of change that advance social and economic justice.
 - B5.7.5 Understand the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.
 - B5.7.6 Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work to practice with systems of all sizes.
 - B5.7.7 Apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development and behavior, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems (i.e., families, groups, organizations, and communities).
 - B5.7.8 Analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies.
 - B5.7.9 Evaluate research studies and apply findings to practice, and, under supervision, to evaluate their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems.
 - B5.7.10 Use communication skills differentially with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community.
 - B5.7.11 Use supervision appropriate to generalist practice.
 - B5.7.12 Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems, and under supervision, seek necessary organizational change.

Liberal Arts Perspective

- B5.8 A liberal arts perspective enriches understanding of the person-environment context of professional social work practice and is integrally related to the mastery of social work content. The baccalaureate professional program in social work is built upon a liberal arts perspective.
- B5.9 A liberal arts perspective provides an understanding of one's cultural heritage in the context of other cultures; the methods and limitations of various systems of inquiry; and the knowledge, attitudes, ways of thinking, and means of communication that are

characteristic of a broadly educated person. Students must be capable of thinking critically about society, about people and their problems, and about such expressions of culture as art, literature, science, history, and philosophy. Students must have direct knowledge of social, psychological, and biological determinants of human behavior and of diverse cultures, social conditions, and social problems.

- B5.10 Determination of whether students have acquired a liberal arts perspective is left to the judgment of each social work program's faculty. Each program must clearly explicate the requirements for training in a liberal arts perspective and the rationale for those requirements.

B6.0 Baccalaureate Curriculum Content

- B6.1 The baccalaureate curriculum must include a liberal arts perspective and the professional foundation. The professional foundation includes content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum. Baccalaureate programs must achieve integration among these professional content areas. Curriculum areas do not need to be taught in discrete courses, but mastery of the professional curriculum must occur through classroom experiences and field practice. The baccalaureate social work curriculum must cover, but is not necessarily limited to, the professional foundation.
- B6.2 The curriculum design of each program must identify a coherent approach for the selection of research and theories offered. Every part of the baccalaureate curriculum must strengthen the student's understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for the delivery and evaluation of practice. Content provided in each curricular area must be relevant to the objectives, philosophy, and mission of the individual program and must facilitate the student's understanding of how the knowledge relates to social work practice.

Social Work Values and Ethics

- B6.3 Programs of social work education must provide specific knowledge about social work values and their ethical implications and must provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their application in professional practice. Students must be assisted to develop an awareness of their personal values and to clarify conflicting values and ethical dilemmas. Among the values and principles that must be infused throughout every social work curriculum are the following:
- B6.3.1 Social workers' professional relationships are built on regard for individual worth and dignity, and advance by mutual participation, acceptance, confidentiality, honesty, and responsible handling of conflict.
- B6.3.2 Social workers respect individuals' right to make independent decisions and to participate actively in the helping process.

- B6.3.3 Social workers are committed to assisting client systems to obtain needed resources.
- B6.3.4 Social workers strive to make social institutions more humane and responsive to human needs.
- B6.3.5 Social workers demonstrate respect for and acceptance of the unique characteristics of diverse populations.
- B6.3.6 Social workers are responsible for their own ethical conduct, the quality of their practice, and for seeking continuous growth in the knowledge and skills of their profession.

Diversity

- B6.4 Professional social work education is committed to preparing students to understand and appreciate human diversity. Programs must provide curriculum content about differences and similarities in the experiences, needs, and beliefs of people. The curriculum must include content about differential assessment and intervention skills that will enable practitioners to serve diverse populations.

Each program is required to include content about population groups that are particularly relevant to the program's mission. These include, but are not limited to, groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin.

Promotion of Social and Economic Justice

- B6.5 Programs of social work education must provide an understanding of the dynamics and consequences of social and economic injustice, including all forms of human oppression and discrimination. They must provide students with the skills to promote social change and to implement a wide range of interventions that advance the achievement of individual and collective social and economic justice. Theoretical and practice content must be provided about strategies of intervention for achieving social and economic justice and for combating the causes and effects of institutionalized forms of oppression.

Populations-at-Risk

- B6.6 Programs of social work education must present theoretical and practice content about patterns, dynamics, and consequences of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression. The curriculum must provide content about people of color, women, and gay and lesbian persons. Such content must emphasize the impact of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression upon these groups.

Each program must include content about populations-at-risk that are particularly relevant to its mission. In addition to those mandated above, such groups include, but

are not limited to, those distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, and physical or mental ability.

Human Behavior and the Social Environment

- B6.7 Programs of social work education must provide content about theories and knowledge of human bio-psycho-social development, including theories and knowledge about the range of social systems in which individuals live (families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities). The human behavior and the social environment curriculum must provide an understanding of the interactions between and among human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems as they affect and are affected by human behavior. The impact of social and economic forces on individuals and social systems must be presented. Content must be provided about the ways in which systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving optimal health and well-being. Content about values and ethical issues related to bio-psycho-social theories must be included. Students must be taught to evaluate theory and apply theory to client situations.

Social Welfare Policy and Services

- B6.8 Social welfare policy and services content must include the history, mission, and philosophy of the social work profession. Content must be presented about the history and current patterns of provision of social welfare services, the role of social policy in helping or deterring people in maintaining or achieving optimal health and well-being, and the effect of policy on social work practice. Students must be taught to analyze current social policy within the context of historical and contemporary factors that shape policy. Content must be presented about the political and organizational processes used to influence policy, the process of policy formulation, and the frameworks for analyzing social policies in light of the principles of social and economic justice.

Social Work Practice

- B6.9 At the baccalaureate level, professional social work education prepares students for generalist practice with systems of all sizes. Practice content emphasizes professional relationships that are characterized by mutuality, collaboration, and respect for the client. Content on practice assessment focuses on the examination of client strengths and problems in the interactions among individuals and between people and their environments.

Social work practice content must include knowledge, values, and skills to enhance the well-being of people and to help ameliorate the environmental conditions that affect people adversely. Practice content must include the following skills: defining issues; collecting and assessing data; planning and contracting; identifying alternative interventions; selecting and implementing appropriate courses of action; using appropriate research to monitor and evaluate outcomes; applying appropriate research-based knowledge and technological advances; and termination. Practice content also in-

cludes approaches to and skills for practice with clients from differing social, cultural, racial, religious, spiritual, and class backgrounds, and with systems of all sizes.

- B6.10 Each program must explicate the ways in which students are prepared for generalist practice.

Research

- B6.11 The research curriculum must provide an understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for practice and to evaluating service delivery in all areas of practice. Ethical standards of scientific inquiry must be included in the research content.

The research content must include quantitative and qualitative research methodologies; analysis of data, including statistical procedures; systematic evaluation of practice; analysis and evaluation of theoretical bases, research questions, methodologies, statistical procedures, and conclusions of research reports; and relevant technological advances.

- B6.12 Each program must identify how the research curriculum contributes to the student's use of scientific knowledge for practice.

Field Practicum

- B6.13 The field practicum is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. It engages the student in supervised social work practice and provides opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting.

- B6.14 Field education at the baccalaureate level requires a minimum of 400 hours in field practicum.

- B6.15 Each educational program must establish standards for field practicum settings that define their social work services and practices, field instructor assignments and activities, and student learning expectations and responsibilities. Individual programs may organize their practice in different ways but must ensure educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored practicum experiences for all students. All programs must provide:

- a. A placement that is based upon the objectives of the educational program and the learning needs of each student.
- b. Structured learning opportunities that enable students to compare their practice experiences, integrate knowledge acquired in the classroom, and expand knowledge beyond the scope of the practicum setting.
- c. Support for field practicum instructors by:
 1. Sharing pertinent information about practicum students.

2. Providing information about the organization and content of the educational curriculum, emphasizing the interrelationships among human behavior, social policy, research, and practice content.
3. Providing information about the sequencing of course content.
4. Articulating clear practice and evaluation goals for the field practicum and for each student.
5. Offering orientation and training programs.

B6.16 The baccalaureate practicum must provide the student with opportunities for:

- a. The development of an awareness of self in the process of intervention.
- b. Supervised practice experience in the application of knowledge, values and ethics, and practice skills to enhance the well-being of people and to work toward the amelioration of environmental conditions that affect people adversely.
- c. Use of oral and written professional communications that are consistent with the language of the practicum setting and of the profession.
- d. Use of professional supervision to enhance learning.
- e. Critical assessment, implementation, and evaluation of agency policy within ethical guidelines.

B7.0 Avenues of Renewal

B7.1 Programs of social work education must remain vital and progressive by actively pursuing ongoing exchanges with the practice community and other essential groups, and by developing and assessing new knowledge and technology.

B7.1.1 Programs must establish and maintain close, reciprocal, and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners, and use those relationships continuously to evaluate the total curriculum.

B7.1.2 Programs must establish and maintain relationships with groups that develop, implement, and benefit from social policies and services.

B7.1.3 Programs must establish and maintain involvement with professional associations and with academic disciplines and departments.

B7.1.4 Programs must assume responsibility for systematic, high-quality scholarship that assesses social work practice and develops new knowledge.

Guide to Self-Study and the Self-Study Report for Baccalaureate Social Work Programs

Background

The self-study process examines the program in light of the requirements of accreditation standards and program and institutional missions. A program's efforts in the self-study chart its future course and promote maintenance of compliance with accreditation standards. One important product of the self-study process is the self-study report. This report should be viewed first and foremost as a program document used to guide program implementation and development.

This report is also the most comprehensive depiction of the program to be examined by the Commission on Accreditation's review. The purpose of this section of the *Handbook* is to assist programs to plan and execute their self-study document as a full, accurate representation of the program, and to provide all information needed by external reviewers.

The self-study process should both reflect and augment the program's regular, continuous self-examination used in program evaluation and development. The usefulness of the self-study process lies in charting a course for the next eight years (four years for programs just granted initial accreditation); identifying current strengths and limitations; and developing a plan that builds on strengths and corrects deficiencies.

Typically, self-study requires a concerted effort by program personnel over an approximately two-year period. Representatives of the administration, faculty, students, field instructors, other social work practitioners, and other appropriate constituencies are involved in the self-study process.

The self-study document represents the comprehensive and systematic process of self-study undertaken by the program. Programs should draft the self-study document using the Evaluative Standards and appropriate sections of the Curriculum Policy Statement as guides to content and self-evaluation.

Structure of the Self-Study Report

The self-study report is to be presented in separate volumes, described below. The primary author of the self-study report should be identified on a face sheet by name and title. Programs are asked to limit the discussion of historical background and mission of the educational institution, especially when this appears in the institution's or program's catalog or bulletin.

Volume I

Programs should facilitate the work of outside reviewers by beginning the initial volume of the self-study document with a detailed table of contents and a clear narrative statement or table

showing the pages addressing each of the Evaluative Standards and sections of the Curriculum Policy Statement. Programs should indicate pages on which all data forms are located.

Volume I of the self-study document must fully demonstrate that the program complies with all Evaluative Standards and the requirements of the Curriculum Policy Statement (collectively called the accreditation standards). This allows the Commission to make its judgment regarding compliance with accreditation standards. This volume of the self-study document should also provide an overall evaluation of the program's strengths, an identification of the issues to be addressed, and a description of the program's future plans. The required data forms are to be inserted at points indicated in the narrative (see further discussion below).

Volume II

The second volume of the self-study should be devoted to curriculum materials, beginning with a complete table of contents indicating the pages of the volume on which each syllabus or course outline appears.

Volume III

Additional institutional and program documents may be incorporated into a third volume including, but not limited to, catalogs, student handbooks and manuals, and the like.

Outline for the Self-Study Document

Introduction

The baccalaureate Evaluative Standards along with the Curriculum Policy Statement comprise the accreditation standards, and form the outline for the self-study document. Within this outline the Commission's review of the self-study document is organized to look for direct and substantial evidence of compliance with each Evaluative Standard (including all parts of a standard). In its review of compliance with the accreditation standards dealing with curriculum, the Commission looks for compliance both with the Evaluative Standards' content and with all parts of the Curriculum Policy Statement requiring curricular design and implementation. The specific Curriculum Policy Statement headings for which content demonstrating program compliance is necessary are discussed under Evaluative Standard 6 - Curriculum, p. 110.

Volume I - Evaluative Standards

Review of the self-study document is facilitated when the program uses the Evaluative Standards themselves, in the order given, as the outline for the self-study document. An alternative is to provide a very clear guide to the location of all content, preceding the self-study narrative.

The accreditation standards — including the Evaluative Standards and those parts of the Curriculum Policy Statement that require program action — guide the substance of the self-study document. The following section is a guide regarding how to discuss each required area of content.

Evaluative Standard 1. Program Rationale and Assessment

- Describe the mission and goals of the social work program. Discuss their consistency with social work's purposes, values, and ethics.
- Relate how program goals reflect content from baccalaureate Curriculum Policy Statement 5.4 to 5.4.5.
- Present the program's objectives, and demonstrate their consistency with the mission and goals of the program. Discuss how program objectives reflect the intent of Curriculum Policy Statement 5.7 to 5.7.12.
- Discuss how the program implements its rationale (mission and goals) throughout the program.
- Describe how all groups mentioned in the standard are made aware of program goals and objectives, and how this information is presented in program documents. Cite these documents along with the self-study narrative.
- Describe the outcome measures and measurement procedures the program uses in systematic program evaluation, and explain how they are used for program development.
- Document the means whereby the program implements systematic self-study and evaluation.
- Discuss actual measurement of achievement of objectives, using findings of the systematic program evaluation.
- Present evidence of ongoing use of program evaluation results in subsequent program planning and curricular design.

Evaluative Standard 2. Organization, Governance, and Resources

- Describe the governance and administrative organization within which the social work program operates. Describe how this organization promotes high-quality professional education and offers sufficient autonomy to support achievement of program goals.
- Discuss how the program maintains autonomy in decision making on program goals, program planning, and goal attainment.
- Provide evidence that the program develops, proposes, defends, and manages its own budget.
- Describe how program faculty's authority over program curriculum is maintained.
- Describe how program administration and faculty participate in personnel policy making and application.
- Demonstrate the sufficiency and appropriateness of secretarial supports that ensure the achievement of program goals. Describe professional and nonprofessional secretarial supports, and computer-based supports assigned to the program, demonstrating their equivalence to the recommended level of supports the standards specify.

- Describe the program's physical facilities, including offices, classroom and meeting space, and the nature of the program's control over these spaces. Describe the equipment allocated for staff, faculty, administration, and student use in the program, relating these resources to program goal attainment. **Insert Form A at this point in the self-study narrative.**
- Describe the responsibilities and authority of the social work program's administrative head (including a workload statement).
- Document the amount of workload release time allocated to the program's chief administrative officer over the calendar year for administrative duties, and the sufficiency of this level of release time to fulfill the obligations of the position.
- Describe the credentials and professional experience of the program's chief administrative officer, including education, experience in teaching, educational administration, and social work practice. Describe the educational degrees this individual holds.
- Use Form B to specify the program's budget for the current academic year and the previous year and include a projection for the next academic year. **Insert Form B at this point in the self-study narrative.** Identify budget allocations for faculty salaries, support services, library and other teaching resources, faculty development, research, travel, operating expenses, and student financial aid.
- Describe the percentage of program funding from the institution and the percentage from sources outside the institution. Document that the overall budget is sufficient to carry out program goals and stable enough to permit program planning by program faculty and administration.
- Describe the adequacy of library holdings, videotapes, and other available teaching resources relative to attainment of program goals. **Insert Form C at this point in the self-study narrative.**

Evaluative Standard 3. Nondiscrimination

- Provide evidence that policies and procedures support the organization and implementation of the program without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, or political or sexual orientation.
- Describe the policies, procedures, and actions (institutional and/or programmatic) used by the program to prevent discrimination in the program's operation and to ensure equity to all program participants. Provide evaluative evidence (see Affirmative Action Guidelines on pages 16-18 in the *Handbook*) of the effectiveness of these antidiscrimination policies and procedures.

Evaluative Standard 4. Faculty

- Describe the faculty complement—full-time, part-time, adjunct, visiting, and any other category of faculty members. **Insert Forms D1, D2, and D3 at this point in the narrative.**
- Provide evidence (in Forms D1, D2, D3) that the program has a minimum of two full-time faculty members with accredited master's degrees in social work whose primary assignment is to the program, and that there are sufficient faculty resources and

sufficient expertise (defined in terms of educational background, teaching [particularly baccalaureate level] and educational administrative experience, and experience in professional practice) to ensure the stability of essential program functions and to allow the program to achieve its specified goals.

- Describe the full-time equivalent faculty to student ratio achieved in the program (identify full-time and adjunct/part-time faculty who teach each course in determining this ratio).
- Document how responsibility for providing educational experience is vested in full-time, knowledgeable, experienced faculty; how part-time or adjunct faculty are used to supplement full-time faculty to provide flexibility and breadth to the program's teaching; and the means through which teaching by these faculty is monitored.
- Document continuity in the assignment of the core of full-time faculty to essential program functions.
- If Form D3 for any faculty who teach as the required courses on social work practice (whether full- or part-time) or coordinate field practicum cannot clearly document the holding of an accredited master's degree in social work and at least two years of post-social work master's degree professional social work practice experience, the program should apply for an exception to Evaluative Standard 4.3 before submitting the self-study document.
- Describe how full-time faculty are assigned responsibilities to carry out their ongoing oversight of the curriculum, and the mechanisms used by faculty for this work.
- Document workload being allocated for all assigned duties as listed in the Evaluative Standard. Describe how these faculty responsibilities are allocated, implemented, and evaluated.
- Document the work year for the coordinator of field practicum, and the amount of administrative release time granted over the calendar year for this assignment.

Evaluative Standard 5. Student Development

- State the admissions policies and procedures of the educational institution and of the program. Describe the program's criteria and procedures for selecting students for the social work major. If the institution's policies preclude screening, describe the procedures used by the program in determining students' suitability for professional social work practice.
- Describe policies and procedures for granting academic credit to students transferring from other accredited and nonaccredited institutions and programs. Document that the concerns included in Evaluative Standard 5.1 are addressed.
- Document that academic credit for life or previous work experience is not given, and that this policy is clearly articulated in formal program documents.
- Describe the program's advisement system, referencing the advisement tasks identified in Evaluative Standard 5.5.
- Describe how faculty doing professional advising are kept fully knowledgeable about the program.

- Describe the educational credentials of all faculty providing professional advisement services (purely academic advisement regarding enrollment, etc. may be provided by faculty other than those holding the master's of social work degree).
- Describe and document program policies and practices regarding student rights and responsibilities. Provide a copy of the statement of student rights and responsibilities that is distributed to students.
- Describe how students are encouraged to form their own organization. Evaluate the effectiveness of the students' organization.
- Describe the mechanisms that permit students to participate in the formulation and modification of policy affecting academic and student affairs and to participate in the program's evaluation.
- Describe the criteria used to evaluate student academic and field performance. Provide a copy of the procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work degree program for reasons of academic and nonacademic performance.
- Document how students are advised of grievance and appeal procedures and other institutional and program policies. Explain how information about grievance and appeals procedures is made available to all faculty.
- **Include Form EB, providing demographic information on the student population, at the conclusion of the section.**

Evaluative Standard 6. Curriculum

- Describe how all constituencies associated with the program are made aware of the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement (Curriculum Policy Statement B1.3).
- Describe the overall organization of the social work foundation curriculum, its defining themes, and how its components are integrated.
- Document how all program components provide equal quality of education. Useful information includes program planning information and comparative evaluation data.
- Define the liberal arts perspective students are to attain. Identify the liberal arts prerequisites for given courses and curriculum areas in the social work foundation, describing other connections between liberal arts and social work foundation content. Incorporate content here relating to Curriculum Policy Statement B5.6 and B5.8-B5.10.
- State the program's definition of generalist social work practice that underlies its practice and other curriculum areas. Relate the program's generalist perspective to the definition of the liberal arts perspective students are to attain.
- Describe the program's approaches to incorporation of content on social work values and ethics, diversity, and populations-at-risk (incorporate content from Curriculum Policy Statement B5.5 and B6.1-B6.6).
- Present the professional foundation areas of human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, and social research. Provide attention to incorporating all content included in the respective sections of the

Curriculum Policy Statement (Curriculum Policy Statement B6.7-B6.12). Explain plans to strengthen each curriculum area.

- Describe the instructional methods used by the program's faculty; identify how these methods reflect the cognitive, affective, and experiential components of learning appropriate to attain program goals; and explain how these methods are consistent with the Curriculum Policy Statement.
- Describe the objectives, requirements, and curriculum design of the student field practicum.
- Describe the criteria for selecting agencies for the practicum, for selecting field instructors with appropriate social work credentials, and for evaluating student learning.
- Document how the program sets and implements educationally directed, coordinated field practicum experiences for all students, works with students in planning for and implementing field placements, and monitors and evaluates the field practicum. Incorporate field practicum content from the Curriculum Policy Statement in this discussion (Curriculum Policy Statement B6.13-6.17). **Include the field instruction manual, student performance assessment forms, and other guides given to field instructors and students in a subsequent volume of the self-study document.**
- Describe the means used by the program to maintain close reciprocal and ongoing relationships with the practice community for purposes of program evaluation and development. Incorporate in this discussion the avenues of renewal required by the Curriculum Policy Statement (Curriculum Policy Statement B7.1-7.1.4).
- Document that only students who are candidates for the baccalaureate degree in social work are admitted to the field practicum.
- Document whether admission to practice courses beyond the pre-practice or introductory level is restricted to social work majors and, if non-majors are admitted to these courses, how the program reviews their involvement according to the requirements in Evaluative Standard 6.7.

Evaluative Standard 7. Alternative Programs

Although the traditional full-time, on-campus program remains the basic structure for baccalaureate and master's degree programs in social work, social work education options have been expanded to offer a multiplicity of educational program designs, some of which qualify as alternative programs. These include dual degree programs, collaborative and off-campus arrangements, and distance learning opportunities. The basis for an alternative program may be in design or delivery components relating to geographic location, time factors, curriculum structure and content, instructional methods, governance, or resources, among others.

Although the overall mission and goals may be the same, the student population for whom the program is developed, the curriculum emphasis, or the educational approach may vary to such an extent that they constitute substantive changes from the traditional program. Relating these alternative programs and their component parts to the accreditation standards involves interpretation, elaboration, and reporting beyond procedures required for more traditional arrangements. Programs should review Evaluative Standard 7 for a definition and description of alternative programs.

The self-study report should incorporate a full description of any implemented alternative programs that do not constitute substantive changes from the regular program, or that have already been specifically approved by the Commission. Specify any changes in the program and supply the findings from the evaluation design that accompanied the original proposal. This description should include:

- A clear rationale for the alternative or collaborative program.
- A full explanation of the curriculum design, and how it is responsive to the mission, goals and objectives of the program.
- A delineation of the admissions requirements, detailing differences in policy or procedures from those governing the traditional program.
- A description of the support systems available to the program, including library resources, faculty resources for teaching and advising, professional socialization opportunities for students, physical facilities, and administrative support.
- An evaluation component detailing educational outcomes of the alternative program. The evaluative design should also include a comparison of outcomes with the traditional program.
- Information regarding institutional structure, autonomy, and other significant information relative to the institutional arrangements, if a collaborative arrangement is anticipated, or if another institution's resources are instrumental to the success of the alternative program.
- Programs must demonstrate that the alternative program provides educational quality comparable to that of the traditional program of which it is a part.

For newly proposed programs offering the equivalent of one year or more of course work, or for operating programs involving substantive changes from the regular program—but which have not been approved by the Commission—a proposal containing this same information is required. Such a proposal may precede or accompany the self-study report, but should be separate from it.

Alternative programs that are collaborative (e.g., two or more institutions combining to sponsor a single social work degree program) must submit additional information on the following topics:

- The structure responsible for providing unified and cohesive administration and coordination of the collaborative program,
- Resources contributed and responsibilities carried by each institution,
- Provision of adequate time for faculty to carry out collaborative aspects of the program, such as additional student advising, inter-institutional and inter-program curriculum planning, policy making, and evaluation of educational outcomes,
- Policies and procedures relating to academic calendars, schedules, cross-registration, admissions, common course syllabi, grading policies, and titles of the degree granted,

- Opportunities and mechanisms for student participation in governance and grievance procedures related to the collaborative program,
- Auxiliary support systems -- library, physical space, support staff, etc.

Programs are advised to discuss alternative proposals with the DOSA staff early in the planning stage, since the Commission must be give approval before the program begins. Programs must submit four (4) copies of the proposal and other supporting documents.

Evaluative Standard 8. Experimental Programs

Experimental programs do not comply with all accreditation standards, and must receive approval from the Commission before implementation.

The self-study report should contain a full description of all experimental programs offered that have already been specifically approved as experimental programs by the Commission. This description should include:

- Findings related to the evaluation of the outcomes of the experimental program.
- If the program is to continue, a detailed program design and evaluation plan. The plan for evaluation of the proposed experiment should follow accepted protocols of evaluation research. The evaluation plan should be sufficiently detailed to enable the Commission to determine the validity of the evaluation design in relation to the identified issues and objectives and to enable replication by other programs.
- The program should report on how project implementation has been designed to avoid exerting a negative impact on the faculty and other resources and finances of the established program.
- The proposal should show that consideration has been given to possible adverse consequences for the public served or the students involved.

Newly proposed experimental programs, or experimental programs that have not received Commission approval, should provide this same information in a proposal submitted to the Commission. That proposal may precede or accompany the self-study, but should be separate from the self-study. A proposal for an experimental program to be offered by an accredited program may also be submitted completely apart from the self-study review cycle.

Considerable advance planning is generally required for experimental proposals, and programs are encouraged to consult with DOSA staff early in the process. Programs must submit four (4) copies of the proposal and other supporting documents.

Volume II

The second volume of the self-study report should contain full course syllabi for all social work courses, and for cognate courses designated as liberal arts prerequisites for the social work foundation.

Volume III/Additional Volumes

An additional volume (or additional volumes) may be needed to incorporate the program handbook, and any other materials used to describe the program to its constituencies (student handbook; field practicum manual; and student assessment and program evaluation forms [including student, field instructor, and faculty evaluations of the program, student evaluations of field instruction, student evaluations of teaching, and evaluations of student performance in field practicum and classroom settings]).

Programs are asked not to submit faculty handbooks, union contracts, or other institutional governance documents not specifically cited as useful to the Commission.

**Master's Programs Evaluative Standards,
Interpretive Guidelines,
Curriculum Policy Statement,
and Self-Study Guide**

Master's Evaluative Standards and Interpretive Guidelines

Preamble

The Curriculum Policy Statement and the Eligibility and Evaluative Standards promote quality social work education. They specify the professional content and the educational context which best prepare social work practitioners. The standards define baccalaureate and graduate level knowledge, values, and skills. Content of all areas detailed in the Curriculum Policy Statement must be included in the curriculum and field practicum. Because of the importance that role modeling, field learning, and educational climate play in the preparation of professional social workers, the program must reflect social work values and principles in all aspects of its operation. The program must demonstrate respect for and understanding of social, cultural, and human diversity consistent with the Curriculum Policy Statement.

To obtain accreditation, a program must meet the following evaluative standards. The Commission on Accreditation (hereafter "Commission") reserves the right to initiate a review of an accredited program whenever circumstances indicate questionable compliance with Evaluative Standards or the Curriculum Policy Statement.

[NOTE: Interpretive Guidelines, in *italics*, follow those standards to which they apply. Interpretive Guidelines explain more fully a standard or its intent. They do not present additional requirements beyond the standards.]

Evaluative Standard 1. Program Rationale and Assessment

- 1.0 The educational program must provide a statement of rationale, including a program mission statement and program goals, consistent with social work's purposes, values, and ethics. The mission and goals are to include quality educational preparation for entry into advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. The program's goals must reflect the intent of Curriculum Policy Statement M 5.1 to 5.4.5.

Interpretive Guideline 1.0 *The program rationale defines and justifies its purposes and focus, giving meaning to all other aspects of the program. Mission and goal statements are global and general in nature, describing*

desired states or results. Program mission and goals are not limited to the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement and should dynamically reflect regional and institutional needs, priorities, and interests to have the greatest possible meaning to all program participants.

Goals are more specific than an overriding mission statement in defining program purposes.

- 1.1 Once the mission and goals have been stated, the program must present its objectives, derived from its statement of mission and goals. The program's objectives must reflect the intent of Curriculum Policy Statement M5.7 to M5.7.14, M6.19, and M6.22.

Interpretive Guideline 1.1 *Objectives are defined as specific, measurable statements of desired achievements. A program could have objectives reflecting design and implementation of the program and reflecting desired program and student achievements. Objectives specify what should happen to students or other target populations or groups as a result of educational and other program actions. They reflect changes in behavior, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, knowledge, or status.*

Achievement of educational objectives requires careful attention to curriculum development to ensure that each objective can be attained as students proceed through the educational process. Student educational objectives should relate to an area of knowledge or skill that can potentially be measured through instruction-related means. Course and field syllabi should reflect educational objectives. Work-related or educational activities after graduation are examples of subsequent activities of graduates.

Program objectives are not limited to the substance of the Curriculum Policy Statement and should dynamically reflect regional and institutional needs, priorities, and interests to have the greatest possible meaning to all program participants. The program may identify other objectives it considers useful, including but not limited to other student learning or activity objectives, program impacts within the institution and community, and faculty impacts on agencies and practice.

- 1.2 The program's rationale, comprised of its statements of mission, goals, and objectives, must be reflected in program implementation.

Interpretive Guideline 1.2 *The program's goals can be implemented by such means as the objectives of curriculum areas, including the field practicum; the objectives of individual courses; faculty assignments and workload; other program initiatives, events, or projects; and the focus and substance of program evaluation activities.*

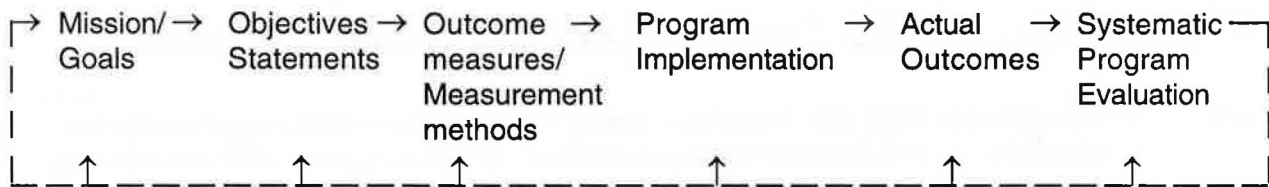
- 1.3 The program must make all faculty members, students, administrators, and each social work professional associated with the program aware of program goals and objectives. Program documents must reflect these goals and objectives.

Interpretive Guideline 1.3 Programs may use a variety of means to communicate their goals to all persons associated with the program. These include, but are not limited to, institutional catalogs and program documents such as student handbooks and field manuals, orientation and training sessions, etc.

- 1.4 The program must specify the outcome measures and measurement procedures THAT are to be used systematically in evaluating the program, and that will enable it to determine its success in achieving its desired objectives.

Interpretive Guideline 1.4 The following schema illustrates the relationships among key ideas inherent in this standard.

The Social Work Education Program



The program defines its mission. Subsequently, specific program goals are laid out. Statements of objectives derived from the mission and goals are specified. The measures to be used to substantiate the degree of achievement of each objective, along with measurement methods (instruments, respondents, data-gathering procedures, statistical procedures, etc.), are stated. The program then is implemented, or operates, until a predetermined point in time (e.g., during a course, at the end of a course, at the end of a year's work, at the end of all course work, at different stages of field practicum, at stated intervals after graduation) at which actual outcomes are evaluated. Findings are used to assess the extent to which objectives are achieved. The findings are fed back (dotted lines in schema, above) into curriculum or other program revisions, and possibly into revision of goals and objectives. In assessing attainment of objectives, a variety of sources of information (e.g., students, faculty, employers of graduates, field instructors, clients, consumers, student work products, and other reports or materials) may be used.

Programs may use a variety of means to gather data, as suggested by the nature of the objectives themselves. Qualitative and/or quantitative procedures are likely to be of value. Examples include the following: exit examinations; pre/post tests of knowledge and/or skill; employer evaluations; alumni self-reports; student self-reports; studies of program and graduates' impacts on consumer groups, agencies, and the wider community; faculty achievement; evidence of contribution to professional knowledge-building; program reputational studies; results of licensing and certification examinations; student evaluations of courses and instructor performance.

- 1.5 The program must show evidence that it engages in ongoing, systematic self-study and evaluation of its total program, and show evidence that the results of evaluation affect program planning and curriculum design.

Interpretive Guideline 1.5 *The program should create and maintain formal means (e.g. committees, procedures, faculty training, reports) to assess all aspects of its operation. Evaluation exists: (1) to determine whether goals are achieved as indicated by actual program outcomes and (2) to allow corrective action and improvements in program design and activities. Programs should be able to document how the results of program evaluations are used to improve program planning and implementation. Program methods designed to ensure such incorporation, and specific examples of the incorporation of results into program revisions and activities, are useful information.*

Evaluative Standard 2. Organization, Governance, and Resources

- 2.0 The program or institution must have policies and practices that assign faculty the rights and responsibilities necessary to achieve high-quality professional education.
- 2.1 The administrative unit of the social work program must have sufficient autonomy to realize the program's goals.

Interpretive Guideline 2.1 *Graduate social work education is generally delivered in an organization known as a school or college whose chief administrator bears the title of dean or director. When possible, the school or college of social work should be a freestanding independent unit, not included in another collegiate organization. If this type of organization is not consistent with the general organizational pattern of the sponsoring university or college, then the social work program may be a member of a college unit. However, it is still desirable that its administrative structure be designated a school or college of social work and the chief administrator bear the title of director or dean. (See Evaluative Standard 2.1.7.)*

The autonomy of the social work program will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- 2.1.1 The social work program must have an established governance and administrative structure ensuring its authority and responsibility for decision making with respect to goal setting, program planning, and achieving specified goals.
- 2.1.2 The social work program must have its own budget, as well as responsibility for budget development and administration.

Interpretive Guideline 2.1.2 *The program's chief administrator should play a central role in developing a proposed budget and presenting it to appropriate authorities, as well as clear responsibility for managing and reporting on that budget during the program's annual operation.*

The budget should include faculty resources, travel, supplies, office equipment, and faculty development support.

- 2.1.3 The social work program faculty must have authority to determine program curriculum within the structure of the institution's policies.
- 2.1.4 The faculty and administration of the social work program must participate in formulating policies related to hiring, retention, promotion, and tenure of program personnel; and have the authority to recruit, retain or terminate, tenure, promote, assign, develop and evaluate social work faculty.
- 2.1.5 The social work program must be assigned an administrative support staff that is demonstrably adequate to ensure achievement of program goals.

Interpretive Guideline 2.1.5 *Heavy demands are placed on professional support staff in a social work education program — continuing communication with students, faculty, program administration, field practicum agencies, and the social work community. At least two full-time professional support staff are recommended.*

Programs should document that the combination of professional support and other human and technical resources is adequate to meet demands in all areas of program functioning, effectively supporting achievement of program goals.

- 2.1.6 The social work program must have sufficient jurisdiction over physical space to realize program goals. This includes classroom space, private faculty offices and office space for administrative and clerical workers; and space for student and faculty meetings and for student socialization.
- 2.1.7 In evaluating autonomy, the Commission will consider whether the social work program has similar organizational status to that of other comparable professional programs offered by the institution.

Interpretive Guideline 2.1.7 *The social work program's status within the institution's structure should be commensurate with other comparable professional programs. If the social work program is not structured as a freestanding entity, it should be associated with other professional programs of comparable purpose and focus.*

- 2.2 The chief administrator of the program must give educational and administrative direction to the program and have demonstrated leadership ability through academic and other experience in the field of social work. The educational credentials of the individual in this role must include a master's degree from an accredited program in social work and a doctorate in social work or a related field. The program's chief administrator is to have no less than 50% of release time over the full academic year for carrying out these duties. The program must give evidence of continuity in compensated coverage of these duties over the summer.

Interpretive Guideline 2.2 This standard applies only to chief administrators appointed after the effective date of these standards (June 1995), and who have not previously served in this capacity. Experience has shown that continuity of leadership is important for professional programs, and at least 50% of the chief administrative officer's workload over the calendar year -- and often much more than that depending on the size and complexity of the program -- is needed to effectively administer an accredited program.

- 2.3 The program's budgetary allocation from the educational institution must be sufficient to carry out the program's specific goals.
 - 2.3.1 The allocation must be stable enough to permit program planning and implementation by faculty and administration.
 - 2.3.2 The administration of the institution and the program must provide the necessary equipment for attaining the program's goals.
 - 2.3.3 The administration of the institution and the program must provide the library holdings and other educational resources necessary for attaining the program's goals.

Evaluative Standard 3. Nondiscrimination and Human Diversity

- 3.0 The program must make specific, continuous efforts to provide a learning context in which understanding and respect for diversity (including age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation) are practiced.

Interpretive Guideline 3.0 Social work education builds upon professional purposes and values; therefore, programs must provide a context for learning that is nondiscriminatory and that reflects the profession's fundamental tenets. Programs should describe how their learning context and educational program and curriculum (such as faculty, staff, and student composition; selection of agencies and their clientele as practicum settings; composition of program advisory and/or field committees; resource allocation; program leadership; speakers series, seminars, and special programs; research and other initiatives) model understanding of and respect for diversity.

Evaluative Standard 4. Faculty

- 4.0 The program must have full-time faculty adequate in number, qualifications, competence, and range of expertise to achieve its specified goals. A proportion of the graduate faculty must have previous graduate faculty experience to give academic leadership in the foundation and concentration areas.

Interpretive Guideline 4.0 *Range of expertise is based on educational background, teaching and educational administrative experience, and experience in professional practice. Faculty size and composition should be commensurate with the number and type of curricular offerings in class and field, the number of students served, and the faculty's educational responsibilities and services.*

It is recommended that the program have full-time faculty to maintain a ratio of no less than one full-time equivalent faculty per 12 full-time equivalent students. The master's program should have no fewer than six full-time faculty. Programs should ensure a core of full-time faculty proportional to the size of the student population to carry out the ongoing functions of the program. A balance of doctoral level faculty to master's level faculty of approximately 4 to 2 is desirable.

Programs that inadvertently fall below the recommended minimum of six full-time faculty — through illness, resignation, etc. — should immediately contact the director of the Council's Division of Standards and Accreditation to confer on how to maintain candidacy or accredited status.

Faculty experience and expertise in teaching and program administration in master's-level social work education programs is an important consideration in evaluating overall faculty expertise to mount and maintain a quality master's program.

Faculty responsibilities include classroom instruction and field liaison; professional advising; planning, implementing, and evaluating the program; and continuing professional development as a teacher-scholar. Faculty members are expected to participate in other professional activities and to undertake community responsibilities essential to the attainment of the program's goals.

- 4.1 Responsibility for providing educational experiences must be vested in a full-time, experienced, knowledgeable faculty who identify with the profession of social work. There is to be sufficient continuity in the assignment of a core of full-time faculty who hold social work doctoral degrees and/or hold master's degrees in social work from a Council-accredited program to ensure stability of the program's essential functions. Part-time and adjunct faculty may provide flexibility and breadth to the program as a supplement to the full-time faculty.
- 4.2 Faculty who teach required practice courses or direct the field practicum must hold credentials that include a master's degree in social work from an accredited program and have the equivalent of two years or more of full-time post-master's degree experience in professional social work practice. [Faculty who have taught required practice courses or coordinated field at the master's level prior to March 1994 must hold the social work master's degree and have post-social work master's degree experience in professional social work practice.]

Interpretive Guideline 4.2 These requirements apply to any faculty member teaching a required practice course in the social work program, or serving as fieldwork coordinator or director, with programs responsible for designating which courses are practice courses required of all majors for graduation.

The requirement of two years or more of post-social work master's degree experience in professional social work practice became effective March 1994, and applies only to faculty who have not taught such course work or coordinated field prior to that time.

Programs that have attained candidacy status or become accredited may apply for exceptions to this standard for their full-time or part-time faculty. For procedures to apply for an exception to this standard, see the "Interpretation and Guidelines for Faculty Teaching Practice or Coordinating Field Practicum" on pages 205-209 of this Handbook.

- 4.3 The responsibilities of the core of full-time faculty must include ongoing oversight of the curriculum, including the design, modification, approval, implementation, and evaluation of the program's curriculum and educational policies; educational policy relating to the admission, advising, retention, and graduation of students; systematic and continuous evaluation of program outcomes in the light of the specified goals of the program; teaching of practice and other social work courses; coordination of field instruction; and maintenance of program integrity.
- 4.4 In determining faculty assignments, workload credit must be given for the time needed to advise students, to select and evaluate field instruction settings, to provide liaison between field settings and students, to evaluate student performance, to perform administrative tasks, to discharge community obligations related to the purposes of the program, to participate in activities of professional organizations, and to engage in professional development activities. The program is to provide the time necessary to engage in research, publication, and other scholarly production.

The coordinator of field instruction must have a full-time appointment with no less than 25% release time over the full academic year for carrying out the duties of that position.

Interpretive Guideline 4.4 Workloads should provide time to meet the expectations the standard describes. Social work faculty are held accountable for being productive scholars. Scholarship is defined broadly to allow faculty to engage in: (1) the discovery of knowledge in chosen fields of expertise through original research; (2) the integration of knowledge in chosen fields of expertise (through replications, integrative analysis, interdisciplinary linking, and similar activities); (3) the application of knowledge to human problems (through service projects demonstrably linked to teaching and research, technical assistance or consultations to human service organizations and other entities, policy analyses, program and practice evaluations); or (4) the documented application of scholarly endeavor to teaching (by wide reading and constant updating of knowledge of the field, as well as by examining and revising of pedagogical methods and teaching materials).

A program should designate a field instruction coordinator with clear authority and responsibility for ongoing field administration. Field coordinators lacking 12-month appointments often have summer assignments and remuneration to address field administration demands occurring during that period (e.g., investigation and creation of field placements, reports on past placements, development of orientation and training materials and programs).

Evaluative Standard 5. Student Development

- 5.0 The program must clearly articulate and implement criteria and processes of student admission.

Interpretive Guideline 5.0 *Criteria and processes of admission should be designed and implemented to accept from the group of applicants those who, in accordance with the program's educational goals, are best qualified for becoming professional social workers at an advanced level of practice.*

Responsibility for student selection should be assigned to persons designated by the program, and admissions standards and processes should reflect an appreciation for the requirements of the profession and of professional social work education. Such standards and processes should be made known publicly, to applicants and others.

- 5.1 Only candidates who have earned a bachelor's degree will be admitted to the master's degree program in social work. The program is accountable for each exception to this requirement.
- 5.2 The program must have written policies and procedures concerning the transfer of credit and the use of proficiency examinations. Such policies and procedures are to avoid redundancy, promote program integrity, and contribute to relevant graduate education.

Interpretive Guideline 5.2 *In considering academic credit for students transferring from other accredited institutions, the program should prevent duplication of academic content by recognizing prior educational achievement, but also ensure student outcomes consonant with program goals. Admissions policies and procedures should be developed to address the possibly differing circumstances of different student groups, including transfer students and advanced standing students (if applicable).*

Social work programs that are not accredited cannot provide reliable, third-party assurance that they meet or exceed minimum standards. Thus, students transferring from such programs present a special problem in gaining acceptance to the program and transferring academic credits. If such students are admitted to an accredited program, the program should take responsibility for ensuring that the courses being transferred are

compatible with relevant evaluative standards and the Curriculum Policy Statement.

The program is also responsible for validating academic credits previously earned. It should define the means whereby students qualify for academic credit for transferred courses. It should have a formalized mechanism to determine whether the content and objectives of the courses taken in the unaccredited program are substantially equivalent to the academic content offered in its own curriculum. Faculty should evaluate the course syllabi including course objectives, content outline, learning activities, theoretical frames of reference, and bibliographies of courses considered for transfer. If comprehensive syllabi are not available or if the program prefers, proficiency examinations may be used. If the program adopts some plan of evaluation on a student-by-student, course-by-course basis, the self-study should explain the evaluative criteria and methods used.

5.3 Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience must not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of courses in the professional foundation areas specified in the Curriculum Policy Statement. (See Curriculum Policy Statement M 6.3 to 6.14). Statements of this policy are to appear in formal program documents.

5.4 The program's advisement system must be clearly specified for both program faculty and students.

Interpretive Guideline 5.4 *Programs should ensure that faculty are accessible on a continuing basis for student advising, and that advisers are fully knowledgeable about the program and institution. Full-time faculty and part-time faculty with continuous appointments to the program could meet these criteria*

5.5 Professional social work advisement must orient students and assist them in assessing their aptitude and motivation for a career in social work, allow for early and periodic evaluation of each student's performance, guide students in selecting areas of course work, and assess with students the field settings that best meet their educational needs and career goals.

5.6 The program must have policies and practices that specify students' rights and responsibilities. Consistent with the policies of the institution, the program is to enable students to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs.

Interpretive Guideline 5.6 *Students should have copies of program and institutional policies available to them in a designated place.*

5.7 The program must provide opportunities for students to organize in their interests as students, and encourage such organization.

- 5.8 The program must make explicit the criteria for evaluating students' academic and field performance. The program's policies and practices are to include procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work program for reasons of academic and nonacademic performance.

Interpretive Guideline 5.8 In developing a student termination policy, the program should consider both academic performance and nonacademic performance or behaviors of students that provide relevant information reflecting their likely performance as social work practitioners. The program's responsibilities to its students and to potential clients/consumers and the field of practice should be balanced in its student termination policy and procedures. These program policies and procedures should reflect the special circumstances of social work but also be consistent with institutional policies and procedures.

Evaluative Standard 6. Curriculum

- 6.0 The program's goals, objectives and curriculum must be consistent with the Curriculum Policy Statement for master's social work education.
- 6.1 The master's curriculum must be developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole. All program components, including part-time and off-campus, are to provide an equal quality of education.

Interpretive Guideline 6.1 Every aspect of the curriculum should reflect the program's goals and objectives. The goals and objectives provide the overarching framework from which the entire curriculum derives. Curriculum coherence should be developed both horizontally and vertically, e.g. across an entire year's curriculum; among courses in curriculum areas; among different sections of the same course; within any given course. Individual courses must demonstrate coherence among course objectives, course outline, texts required and supplemental readings, assignments, and bibliography.

Continuing faculty attention should be given to curriculum development. The curriculum should be reviewed regularly in the light of actual student outcomes, new knowledge, and the demands of the profession and practice. Modifications should be made as needed on the basis of such reviews. The means used by the program to implement ongoing curriculum development should be formalized.

- 6.2 The master's curriculum prepares students for advanced social work practice; it has a liberal arts prerequisite and must include the professional foundation and one or more concentrations. (See Curriculum Policy Statement M5.5.)

Interpretive Guideline 6.2 The program should define its conceptions of foundation and advanced practice and differentiate between the two practice levels (advanced and foundation), including the field practicum at each

level. The program should explain the relationship of its concentration(s) to the professional foundation and to a liberal arts perspective. The program should explain the relationship between the advanced curriculum and the foundation curriculum. The program should provide a rationale for its concentrations.

Curriculum Policy Statements M5.9-M5.11 discuss the liberal arts perspective, and require that all programs clearly explicate the requirements for attaining a liberal arts perspective and the rationale for these requirements. Programs should identify their conception of the liberal arts perspective, and the mechanisms used to ensure that all students entering the program will have already attained, or will be expected to acquire, content to ensure the liberal arts perspective.

Curriculum Policy Statements M6.5-M6.18 discuss the master's degree curriculum content, and require that programs clearly explicate how values and ethics, diversity, promotion of social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum constitute the professional foundation

- 6.3 The methods of instruction must reflect the cognitive, affective and experiential components of learning appropriate to the attainment of the program's specified goals. Instructional methods are to involve students in their learning.

Interpretive Guideline 6.3 *The Commission on Accreditation does not prescribe specific educational methods, but is concerned that the methods used support the cognitive, affective and experiential components of learning appropriate to the specific course, the program's goals, and to adequate evaluation of educational objectives. The program should demonstrate that its teaching methods permit appropriate synthesis, application, and demonstration of attainment of content in all curriculum offerings, including those for part-time, weekend, and off-campus students. Equal quality of the educational methods used in all program components for given areas of content should be demonstrated.*

- 6.4 The program is responsible for providing a clearly designed field practicum for all students including standards for selecting agencies, selecting field instructors with master's degrees in social work, and evaluating student learning in the practicum.

Interpretive Guideline 6.4 *The program should exercise responsibility for the administration of the field practicum, ensuring planned cooperation and coordination between a program and the agencies it selects for the field placement of students. The program should designate a field coordinator with clear authority and responsibility for ongoing field administration.*

The program's administrative responsibility should include preparation of a field manual stating field policy and procedures, the objectives of this area of curriculum, and description of the responsibilities of program and agency representatives and students.

The program should articulate the standards it requires to qualify agencies for student field placements. The student's field practicum agency should be evaluated in terms of its consonance with the program's mission, goals, and objectives; its appropriateness for specific learning experiences; its ability to provide educationally directed field instruction; and its clear articulation of student learning in tasks assigned.

If the student is also employed in the agency where the field practicum takes place, the availability of release time for course and field instruction should be ensured. Student assignments and field practicum supervision should differ from those associated with the student's employment. It should also be demonstrated that there is no diminution of the program's established requirements in class and field practicum and that field instruction is educationally focused rather than solely centered on agency services. As one means of ensuring equal educational opportunity for all students, the field practicum should be administered in accordance with the pattern established by the program for all students. Agencies involved in this type of field placement should meet the same criteria as other field agencies.

The program should identify the credentials it requires to qualify field instructors, and the credentials should be compatible with program goals. Assessment of a field instructor's qualifications should take into account the individual's professional education, commitment to the values of the social work profession, competence in practice, and interest in supporting student education. A basic requirement for assuming field instruction responsibilities is the agency's adjustment of the individual staff member's work assignments to permit adequate time to develop and implement the student's field practicum. The field practicum plan should give the student regular access to the field instructor.

In those exceptional cases where the field instructor does not hold a master's in social work degree, the social work program faculty should assume responsibility for identifying the specific areas that will require additional faculty involvement to ensure that a social work focus and identification are sustained, and for providing whatever involvement is judged necessary to achieve this objective. The program should be accountable for carrying out this responsibility. Faculty involvement includes frequent and sustained liaison visits to the agency to coordinate and monitor field learning assignments.

The program should articulate detailed criteria for assessing student progress, and should develop and maintain structured means for evaluating student learning and performance in the field practicum. Field instructors and students should be fully informed of the criteria and means for assessing student progress; these may be disseminated in a field manual, program handbook, or other documents.

- 6.5 Programs must establish and maintain close reciprocal and ongoing relationships with the social work practice community as part of the process for continuous evaluation of curriculum.

Interpretive Guideline 6.5 *The program should initiate and maintain regular planned exchanges among the program, representatives of field practicum agencies, and other social work practitioners regarding the program's educational goals and objectives, curriculum, student performance, and developments in the field setting that affect student learning. The program should also systematically provide for participation of field instructors and other social work practitioners in curriculum assessment leading to curriculum revision and development.*

Evaluative Standard 7. Alternative Programs

- 7.0 Alternative programs introduce change into one or more components of a program already accredited by the Commission. If such alterations do not constitute substantive changes the program must, as part of the self-study process at the time of submitting materials for accreditation, include information about the alternative program and its evaluation results.

If an alternative program involves substantive change, the program is to submit a proposal for the Commission's approval before implementing the alternative program.

Interpretive Guideline 7.0 *Although the traditional full-time, on-campus program remains the basic structure for master's degree programs in social work, programs also offer a multiplicity of educational alternatives, including off-campus arrangements, dual master's degree programs, part-time or weekend programs, and collaborative arrangements among more than one educational institution. Differences in design or delivery components include those relating to geographic location, time factors, curriculum structure and content, instructional methods, governance, and resources. Although the overall mission and goals may be the same, the student population for whom they are developed, the curriculum emphasis, or the educational approach often vary to the extent that they constitute substantive changes. Substantive changes are consistent with curriculum policy and accreditation standards, but do not coincide with the design of the accredited program in one or more ways.*

Relating these programs and their component parts to the accreditation standards involves interpretation, elaboration, and reporting beyond procedures required for more traditional arrangements.

In reviewing the materials concerning an alternative program, the Commission may request additional information, especially if the alternative program involves substantive changes or seems to fall outside curriculum policies or accrediting standards and thus constitutes an experimental program. Questions about whether a program or portion of a program falls

outside curriculum policies or accrediting standards should be referred to the director of the Division of Standards and Accreditation.

- 7.1 An alternative program that offers the equivalent of one or more academic years of the social work degree program, whether the class or field curriculum or both, in an off-campus location must submit a proposal to the Commission on Accreditation for approval before implementing the program.

Interpretive Guideline 7.1 *Even when an alternative program is exactly modeled on the main-campus program, if it offers the equivalent in credits of one year or more of course work in an off-campus location it should submit a proposal for approval by the Commission prior to implementation.*

- 7.2 An alternative program that involves collaborative arrangements between two or more educational institutions must submit a proposal for the Commission on Accreditation's approval before implementing the collaborative program.

Interpretive Guideline 7.2 *Although collaborative arrangements are not accredited as such, the same standards that apply to individual programs are applied in the evaluating collaborative arrangements. This permits the Commission to evaluate the structure through which participating programs pool their resources. If a participant in a collaborative is able to meet a specific standard only by virtue of the resources of the collaborative, the combined resources of the collaborative should equal or exceed those that the accreditation standards would normally require of the participating programs evaluated individually. At the same time, a collaborative cannot be evaluated simply by adding up the resources of its parts; rather, it is imperative to monitor the ways in which the total resources are effectively interrelated and used by the individual programs.*

Because of great differences in organizational structure and institutional auspices among programs participating in collaborative arrangements, each collaborating educational institution should submit a separate application for the Council accreditation. However, all the participants in a collaborative arrangement should submit their applications simultaneously.

- 7.3 The alternative program proposal must include a detailed plan that presents the rationale and goals of the program and elaborates on the curriculum content and objectives. The program is to document the equal quality of its alternative programs relative to its standard program. (See Evaluative Standard 6.1.) A design for evaluating the outcomes of the program must be included. (See Evaluative Standards 1.4-1.5.)

Interpretive Guideline 7.3 *The program should have an evaluation design for assessing the outcomes of the alternative program, and for contrasting these outcomes with those of the standard program. The plan for evaluation should follow accepted protocols of evaluation research. The evaluation plan should be presented in sufficient detail to enable the Commission to determine the validity of the evaluation design in relation to the identified goals and objectives. (See master's Guide to Self-Study on pp.*

151-153 of this Handbook for further details on developing an alternative program proposal).

Evaluative Standard 8. Innovative Programs

The Commission on Accreditation is committed to nurturing innovations in social work education and to supporting new and creative ideas. The Commission shares the excitement of the innovator and welcomes the review of innovative proposals.

An innovation, whether a totally new conceptualization or a “re-visiting” of an old idea that was abandoned, represents a creative breakthrough in content or established patterns of program design or delivery. An innovation may be proposed for any aspect of a social work program, such as, major curriculum modifications; alterations in resource configurations (e.g., collaborative, interdisciplinary, etc.); alternative program structures; or some other change that is undertaken to test, expand, or improve social work education. This standard seeks to provide latitude for programs to design and operationalize new ways of educating social work professionals. Innovative programs are distinguished from alternative programs by virtue of the fact that they propose to depart from one or more accreditation standards.

The Commission on Accreditation recognizes that no innovation is a “finished product”, that innovations are dynamic and that the goals of an innovation are likely to evolve as the program proceeds with its work and takes into account feedback from various sources. To accommodate for this evolution, the accreditation cycle for programs testing a proposed innovation will be eight years and will include the Commission’s assessment during the cycle, at which time the incorporation of changes and refinements resulting from the evolving nature of the innovation can be incorporated.

This standard is intended to help programs address basic areas in the conceptualization of innovations. It is intended to support change while retaining the public trust, encouraging responsibility as changes are made, and providing assurance to consumers, be they students or clients, that the innovation will not jeopardize the quality of social work education.

- 8.0 A proposal for innovation must be submitted to the Commission on Accreditation for approval prior to implementation. The proposal is to identify explicitly the standard or standards to be modified by the program and/or from which the program will depart, and for which the Commission’s approval is sought.
- 8.1 A proposal for innovation must emanate from an accredited program and be directed to a degree program at the same level.
- 8.2 A proposal for innovation must include: a) a design for evaluating the effects of the innovation at specified points during and at the end of the implementation period; b) criteria for evaluating positive and negative outcomes of the innovation; c) a plan for potential incorporation of the innovation at the end of the experimental period; and d) a plan for student degree completion if the innovation is discontinued.

- 8.3 A proposal for innovation must describe the mission, rationale, implementation, and plans for assessment of the proposed change.

Interpretive Guideline 8.3 The following is a suggested proposal outline:

1. **Conceptualization of the proposed innovation:** How is the innovation related to the mission of the established program? How is the proposed program innovative? What linkages exist between the established program and the proposed innovation? How, if at all, will the established program be affected by the innovation? How are the established program's resources augmented for the innovative program?

2. **Goals and objectives:** What are short-term and long-term goals? What procedures will be prepared for modifying goals during the implementation of the innovation?

3. **Content:** What will be the effect of the innovation on student learning? How will the innovation affect the established program's organization of knowledge, values and skills content?

4. **Implementation:** How will the change be phased in and out according to student cohorts? How will the program guarantee class completion of academic requirements? How will the program organize learning processes? How will the program teach its conceptualization of practice? How will students be notified about the implications of the innovation? What resources, including human resources, will be required?

5. **Evaluation:** How will the program measure achievement of goals of the innovation? How will the program determine whether the innovation will be retained in the established program? If the innovation is terminated, what steps will be taken?

6. **Professional Contributions:** How will the program share information about the innovation with the academic and professional community?

- 8.4 A proposal for innovation must describe the relevance of the proposed innovation to the mission of the profession; the relationship to the values and ethics of the profession; and the responsiveness to the contextual conditions and societal needs.

Curriculum Policy Statement for Master's Degree Programs in Social Work Education

M1.0 Scope and Intent of the Curriculum Policy Statement

- M1.1 This document sets forth the official curriculum policy for the accreditation of master's (MSW) programs of social work education by the Council on Social Work Education. It supersedes all prior statements of curriculum policy for the master's program level.
- M1.2 The Curriculum Policy Statement establishes mandates for minimum requirements for the curricula of master's programs to be accredited by the Council. The policy statement specifies certain content areas and requires that they relate logically to each other, to the purposes and values of social work as set forth in this document, and to the purposes, mission, resources, and educational context of each professional program. The statement does not prescribe any particular curriculum design.
- M1.3 Each program is responsible for making every faculty member, student, field instructor, and administrator associated with the program aware of the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement.

M2.0 Relationship to Accreditation Standards

- M2.1 The Commission on Accreditation of the Council develops standards by which social work education programs are evaluated for accreditation. These standards pertain to the organization, administration, and curriculum implementation of programs of social work education. Curriculum standards are derived from and must conform to this Curriculum Policy Statement.

M3.0 Premises Underlying Social Work Education

- M3.1 The purpose of social work education is to prepare competent and effective social work professionals who are committed to practice that includes services to the poor and oppressed, and who work to alleviate poverty, oppression, and discrimination.
- M3.2 Social work education is based upon a specific body of knowledge, values, and professional skills. It is grounded in the profession's history and philosophy. Education for the profession promotes the development and advancement of knowledge, practice skills, and services that further the well-being of people and promote social and economic justice. Social work education is responsible for the production and application of research and scholarship aimed at advancing social work practice.

- M3.3 Programs of social work education are offered at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. Doctoral programs are not accredited by the Council.
- M3.4 Programs of social work education maintain close, reciprocal, and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners and with groups and organizations that promote, provide, or seek to influence social policies and social work services. Responsibility for initiating these relationships rests with social work education programs. Effective programs develop and maintain a systematic process of communication with these individuals and groups.
- M3.5 The effectiveness of any profession depends on the active engagement of its members in continuous learning. Programs of social work education strive to promote continuing professional development of students and faculty. Programs seek to teach students how to become lifelong learners who are motivated to continue the development of knowledge and skills throughout their careers.
- M3.6 Effective social work education programs recognize the interdependence of nations and the need for worldwide professional cooperation.
- M3.7 Social work education programs must assume a leadership role within the profession by offering curricula that are at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and its supporting disciplines.

M4.0 Purpose of Social Work

- M4.1 The profession of social work is committed to the enhancement of human well-being and to the alleviation of poverty and oppression. The social work profession receives its sanction from public and private auspices and is the primary profession in the provision of social services. Within its general scope of concern, professional social work is practiced in a wide variety of settings and has four related purposes:
 - M4.1.1 The promotion, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of the social functioning of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by helping them to accomplish tasks, prevent and alleviate distress, and use resources.
 - M4.1.2 The planning, formulation, and implementation of social policies, services, resources, and programs needed to meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities.
 - M4.1.3 The pursuit of policies, services, resources, and programs through organizational or administrative advocacy and social or political action, to empower groups at risk and to promote social and economic justice.
 - M4.1.4 The development and testing of professional knowledge and skills related to these purposes.

M5.0 Purpose and Structure of Master's Social Work Education

M5.1 The purpose of professional social work education is to enable students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession into competent practice. The achievement of this purpose requires clarity about learning objectives and expected student outcomes, flexibility in programming and teaching to accommodate a diverse student population, and commitment of sufficient time and resources to the educational process.

M5.2 Two levels of social work education are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education: the baccalaureate and the master's. The baccalaureate level prepares students for generalist social work practice, and the master's level prepares students for advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. These levels of education differ from each other in the depth, breadth, and specificity of knowledge and skill that students are expected to synthesize and apply in practice.

Both levels of social work education must provide the professional foundation curriculum that contains the common body of knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. This common base is transferable among settings, population groups, and problem areas. The master's level of social work education must include the professional foundation content and concentration content for advanced practice in an identifiable area.

M5.3 Professional social work education at the master's level takes place in accredited colleges and universities. It requires the equivalent of two academic years of full-time study and leads to a professional degree at the master's level. Entry into the MSW program does not require completion of the BSW degree.

M5.4 All master's social work programs must:

M5.4.1 Provide content about social work practice with client systems of various sizes and types.

M5.4.2 Prepare graduates to practice with diverse populations.

M5.4.3 Provide content about the social contexts of social work practice, the changing nature of those contexts, the behavior of organizations, and the dynamics of change.

M5.4.4 Infuse throughout the curriculum the values and ethics that guide professional social workers in their practice.

M5.4.5 Prepare graduates who are aware of their responsibility to continue their professional growth and development.

M5.5 The master's curriculum must be based upon a liberal arts perspective and must include the professional foundation and one or more concentrations.

- M5.6 The master's curriculum must be developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole.
- M5.7 Graduates of a master's social work program are advanced practitioners who can analyze, intervene, and evaluate in ways that are highly differentiated, discriminating, and self-critical. They must synthesize and apply a broad range of knowledge as well as practice with a high degree of autonomy and skill. They must be able to refine and advance the quality of their practice as well as that of the larger social work profession. These advanced competencies must be appropriately integrated and reflected in all aspects of their social work practice, including their ability to:
 - M5.7.1 Apply critical thinking skills within professional contexts, including synthesizing and applying appropriate theories and knowledge to practice interventions.
 - M5.7.2 Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with an understanding of, and respect for, the positive value of diversity.
 - M5.7.3 Demonstrate the professional use of self.
 - M5.7.4 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the strategies and skills of change that advance social and economic justice.
 - M5.7.5 Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.
 - M5.7.6 Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.
 - M5.7.7 Apply the knowledge and skills of advanced social work practice in an area of concentration.
 - M5.7.8 Critically analyze and apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development and behavior, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems (i.e., families, groups, organizations, and communities).
 - M5.7.9 Analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies and demonstrate skills for influencing policy formulation and change.
 - M5.7.10 Evaluate relevant research studies and apply findings to practice, and demonstrate skills in quantitative and qualitative research design, data analysis, and knowledge dissemination.
 - M5.7.11 Conduct empirical evaluations of their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems.
 - M5.7.12 Use communication skills differentially with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community.

- M5.7.13 Use supervision and consultation appropriate to advanced practice in an area of concentration.
- M5.7.14 Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.
- M5.8 Duplication and redundancy of content mastered at the baccalaureate level must be avoided in master's programs. Specifically, BSW graduates who enter MSW programs should not repeat professional foundation content in the master's program that has been mastered in the BSW program. In order to verify mastery and to prevent unproductive repetition, master's programs must develop explicit policies and procedures relevant to admission, course waivers, substitutions, exemptions, or advanced placement. Credit for advanced placement can be granted only for content in the professional foundation. Advanced placement signifies mastery of required content but does not necessarily signify exemption from credit hours. The program must clearly explain specific policies and procedures for advanced placement.

Liberal Arts Perspective

- M5.9 A liberal arts perspective enriches understanding of the person-environment context of professional social work practice and is integrally related to the mastery of social work content. This perspective is prerequisite to the master's professional program in social work.
- M5.10 A liberal arts perspective provides an understanding of one's cultural heritage in the context of other cultures; the methods and limitations of various systems of inquiry; and the knowledge, attitudes, ways of thinking, and means of communication that are characteristic of a broadly educated person. Students entering the professional curriculum must be capable of thinking critically about society, about people and their problems, and about expressions of culture such as art, literature, science, history, and philosophy. Students must have knowledge about social, psychological, and biological determinants of human behavior and of diverse cultures, social conditions, and social problems.
- M5.11 Determination of whether students have acquired a liberal arts perspective is left to the judgment of the faculty of each social work program. Each program must clearly explicate the requirements for attaining a liberal arts perspective and the rationale for those requirements.

M6.0 Master's Curriculum Content

- M6.1 The curriculum at the master's level must include both foundation and concentration content. The professional foundation includes content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum. Concentration content includes knowledge, values, and

skills for advanced practice in an identifiable area. Master's programs must achieve integration among these content areas. Curriculum areas do not need to be taught in discrete courses, but mastery of the curriculum must occur through classroom experiences and field practice. The master's social work curriculum must cover, but is not necessarily limited to, the professional foundation and the concentration content.

- M6.2 The curriculum design of each program must identify a coherent approach to selecting the research and theories offered. Every part of the master's curriculum must strengthen the student's understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for the delivery and evaluation of practice. Content provided in each curricular area must be relevant to the objectives, philosophy, and mission of the individual program and must facilitate the student's understanding of how the knowledge relates to social work practice.

M6.3 The Professional Foundation

- M6.4 New advances in practice knowledge, as well as the accumulated knowledge of social work education and the social work profession, determine the specific content required for the professional foundation. The professional foundation curriculum must include content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum.

Social Work Values and Ethics

- M6.5 Programs of social work education must provide specific knowledge about social work values and their ethical implications, as well as opportunities for students to demonstrate their application in professional practice. Students must be assisted to develop an awareness of their personal values and to clarify conflicting values and ethical dilemmas. Among the values and principles that must be infused throughout every social work curriculum are the following:
- M6.5.1 Social workers' professional relationships are built on regard for individual worth and dignity, and are advanced by mutual participation, acceptance, confidentiality, honesty, and responsible handling of conflict.
 - M6.5.2 Social workers respect the individual's right to make independent decisions and to participate actively in the helping process.
 - M6.5.3 Social workers are committed to assisting client systems to obtain needed resources.
 - M6.5.4 Social workers strive to make social institutions more humane and responsive to human needs.
 - M6.5.5 Social workers demonstrate respect for and acceptance of the unique characteristics of diverse populations.

- M6.5.6 Social workers are responsible for their own ethical conduct, the quality of their practice, and seeking continuous growth in the knowledge and skills of their profession.

Diversity

- M6.6 Professional social work education is committed to preparing students to understand and appreciate human diversity. Programs must provide curriculum content about differences and similarities in the experiences, needs, and beliefs of people. The curriculum must include content about differential assessment and intervention skills that will enable practitioners to serve diverse populations.

Each program is required to include content about population groups that are particularly relevant to the program's mission. These include, but are not limited to, groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin.

Promotion of Social and Economic Justice

- M6.7 Programs of social work education must provide an understanding of the dynamics and consequences of social and economic injustice, including all forms of human oppression and discrimination. They must provide students with the skills to promote social change and to implement a wide range of interventions that further the achievement of individual and collective social and economic justice. Theoretical and practice content must be provided about strategies of intervention for achieving social and economic justice and for combating the causes and effects of institutionalized forms of oppression.

Populations-at-Risk

- M6.8 Programs of social work education must present theoretical and practice content about patterns, dynamics, and consequences of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression. The curriculum must provide content about people of color, women, and gay and lesbian persons. Such content must emphasize the impact of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression upon these groups.

Each program must include content about populations-at-risk that are particularly relevant to its mission. In addition to those mandated above, such groups include, but are not limited to, those distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, and physical or mental ability.

Human Behavior and the Social Environment

- M6.9 The professional foundation must provide content about theories and knowledge of the human bio-psycho-social development, including theories and knowledge about the range of social systems in which individuals live (families, groups, organizations,

institutions, and communities). The human behavior and social environment curriculum must provide an understanding of the interactions among human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems as they affect and are affected by human behavior. The impact of social and economic forces on individuals and social systems must be presented. Content must be provided about the ways in which systems promote or deter people in the maintaining or achieving optimal health and well-being. Content about values and ethical issues related to bio-psycho-social theories must be included. Students must be taught to evaluate theory and apply theory to client situations.

Social Welfare Policy and Services

- M6.10 The foundation social welfare policy and services content must include the history, mission, and philosophy of the social work profession. Content must be presented about the history and current patterns of provision of social welfare services, the role of social policy in helping or deterring people in the maintenance or attainment of optimal health and well-being, and the effect of policy on social work practice. Students must be taught to analyze current social policy within the context of historical and contemporary factors that shape policy. Content must be presented about the political and organizational processes used to influence policy, the process of policy formulation, and the frameworks for analyzing social policies in light of principles of social and economic justice.

Social Work Practice

- M6.11 The professional foundation prepares students to apply a generalist perspective to social work practice with systems of all sizes. Foundation practice content emphasizes professional relationships that are characterized by mutuality, collaboration, and respect for the client system. Content on practice assessment focuses on the examination of client strengths and problems in the interactions among individuals and between people and their environments.

Foundation practice content must include knowledge, values, and skills to enhance the well-being of people and to help ameliorate the environmental conditions that affect people adversely. Practice content must include the following skills: defining issues; collecting and assessing data; planning and contracting; identifying alternative interventions; selecting and implementing appropriate courses of action; using appropriate research to monitor and evaluate outcomes; applying appropriate research-based knowledge and technological advances; and termination. Practice content also includes approaches and skills for practice with clients from differing social, cultural, racial, religious, spiritual, and class backgrounds, and with systems of all sizes.

Research

- M6.12 The foundation research curriculum must provide an understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for practice and for evaluating

service delivery in all areas of practice. Ethical standards of scientific inquiry must be included in the research content.

The research content must include qualitative and quantitative research methodologies; analysis of data, including statistical procedures; systematic evaluation of practice; analysis and evaluation of theoretical bases, research questions, methodologies, statistical procedures, and conclusions of research reports; and relevant technological advances.

- M6.13 Each program must identify how the research curriculum contributes to the student's use of scientific knowledge for practice.

Field Practicum

- M6.14 The field practicum is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. It engages the student in supervised social work practice and provides opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting.

- M6.15 Field education at the master's level requires a minimum of 900 hours in field practicum.

- M6.16 Each educational program must establish standards for field practicum settings that define their social work services and practices, field instructor assignments and activities, and student learning expectations and responsibilities. Individual programs may organize their practice in different ways but must ensure educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored practicum experiences for all students. All programs must provide:

- a. Placements based upon the objectives of the educational program and the learning needs of each student.
- b. Structured learning opportunities that enable students to compare their practice experiences, integrate knowledge acquired in the classroom, and expand knowledge beyond the scope of the practicum setting.
- c. Support for field practicum instructors by:
 1. Sharing pertinent information about practicum students.
 2. Providing information about the organization and content of the educational curriculum, emphasizing the interrelationships among human behavior, social policy, research, and practice content.
 3. Providing information about the sequencing of course content.
 4. Articulating clear practice and evaluation goals for the field practicum and for each individual student.
 5. Offering orientation and training programs.

Foundation Practicum

- M6.17 The purpose of the foundation practicum is for the student to apply foundation knowledge, skills, values, and ethics to practice.
- M6.18 The foundation practicum must provide the student with opportunities for:
- a. The development of an awareness of self in the process of intervention.
 - b. Supervised practice experience in the application of knowledge, values and ethics, and practice skills to enhance the well-being of people and to work toward the amelioration of environmental conditions that affect people adversely.
 - c. Use of oral and written professional communications that are consistent with the language of the practicum setting and the profession.
 - d. Use of professional supervision to enhance learning.
 - e. Critical assessment, implementation, and evaluation of agency policy within ethical guidelines.

M6.19 Concentration Curriculum

- M6.20 The central purpose of the master's curriculum is to prepare students for advanced social work practice in an identifiable concentration area. Each program must clearly explicate for each concentration the (1) conceptualization and design, (2) expected educational outcomes, and (3) content.

Conceptualization and Design

- M6.21 A concentration provides a context within which advanced practice skills and knowledge are acquired. A conceptual framework, built upon relevant theories, shapes the breadth and depth of knowledge and practice skills to be acquired.

Programs have the freedom to establish concentrations within an organizing framework that is consistent with the purpose of social work and its traditional values. The organizing framework for concentrations must have curricular coherence and logic, and must be anchored in the liberal arts and the professional foundation. The program must have sufficient resources to support the concentrations offered. Frameworks and perspectives for concentrations that are frequently offered by programs include fields of practice, problem areas, populations-at-risk, intervention methods or roles, and practice contexts and perspectives. Combinations of concentrations are permitted.

Concentration Outcomes

- M6.22 Each master's program must apply foundation content to the central issues relevant to the areas of concentration. Programs must determine educational outcomes for each concentration offered.

Concentration Content

- M6.23 Concentration content must be designed to prepare students for advanced practice. The emphasis of content areas must be relevant to the concentration and may vary across concentrations.

Concentration Practicum

- M6.24 The concentration practicum for master's social work education must clearly support the student's area(s) of concentration.

M7.0 Avenues of Renewal

- M7.1 Programs of social work education must remain vital and progressive by actively pursuing ongoing exchanges with the practice community and other essential groups, and by developing and assessing new knowledge and technology.
- M7.1.1 Programs must establish and maintain close, reciprocal and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners, and use those relationships to continuously evaluate the total curriculum.
- M7.1.2 Programs must establish and maintain relationships with groups that develop, implement, and benefit from social policies and services.
- M7.1.3 Programs must establish and maintain involvement with the professional associations and with disciplines and departments in the academic community.
- M7.1.4 Programs must assume responsibility for systematic and high-quality scholarship that assesses social work practice and develops new knowledge.

Guide to Self-Study and the Self-Study Report for Master's of Social Work Programs

Background

The self-study process examines the program in light of the requirements of accreditation standards and program and institutional missions. A program's efforts in the self-study chart its future course and promote maintenance of compliance with accreditation standards. One important product of the self-study process is the self-study report. This report should be viewed first and foremost as a program document used to guide program implementation and development.

This report is also the most comprehensive depiction of the program the Commission examines in its review. The purpose of this section of the *Handbook* is to assist programs to plan and execute their self-study report as a full, accurate representation of the program, and to provide all information external reviewers need.

The self-study process should both reflect and augment the program's regular, continuous self-examination used in program evaluation and development. The usefulness of the self-study process lies in charting a course for the next eight years (four years for programs just granted initial accreditation); identifying current strengths and limitations; and developing a plan that builds on strengths and corrects deficiencies.

Typically, self-study requires a concerted effort by program personnel over approximately a two-year period. Representatives of the administration, faculty, students, field instructors and other social work practitioners, and other appropriate constituencies are involved in the self-study process.

The self-study report is a representation of the comprehensive and systematic process of self-study undertaken by the program. Programs should draft the self-study report using the Evaluative Standards and appropriate sections of the Curriculum Policy Statement as guides to content and self-evaluation.

Structure of the Self-Study Report

The self-study report should be presented in separate volumes, described below. The primary author of the self-study report should be identified on a face sheet by name and title. Programs are asked to limit the discussion of historical background and mission of the college or university, especially when this appears in the institution's catalog or bulletin.

Volume I

Programs should facilitate the work of outside reviewers by beginning the initial volume of the self-study report with a detailed table of contents and a clear narrative statement or table show-

ing the pages addressing each of the Evaluative Standards and sections of the Curriculum Policy Statement. Programs should indicate pages on which data forms are located.

Volume I of the self-study report must fully demonstrate that the program complies with all Evaluative Standards and the requirements of the Curriculum Policy Statement (collectively called the accreditation standards). This allows the Commission to judge compliance with accreditation standards. This volume of the self-study report should also provide an overall evaluation of the program's strengths, an identification of the issues to be addressed, and a description of the program's future plans. The required data forms are to be inserted at indicated points in the narrative (see further discussion below).

Volume II

The second volume should be devoted to curriculum materials, beginning with a complete table of contents indicating the pages of the volume on which each syllabus or course outline may be found.

Volume III

Additional institutional and program documents may be incorporated into a third volume including, but not limited to, catalogs, student handbooks and manuals, and the like.

Outline for Self-Study Report

Introduction

The master's Evaluative Standards along with the Curriculum Policy Statement comprise the accreditation standards, and form the outline for the self-study report. Within this outline the Commission's review of the self-study report looks for direct and substantial evidence of compliance with each Evaluative Standard (including all parts of the standard). In its review of compliance with the accreditation standards dealing with curriculum, the Commission looks for compliance both with the Evaluative Standards content and with all parts of the Curriculum Policy Statement requiring curricular design and implementation. The specific Curriculum Policy Statement headings for which the report should document program compliance are discussed under Evaluative Standard 6 - Curriculum, pp. 150-151.

Volume I - Evaluative Standards

Review of the self-study report is facilitated when the program uses the Evaluative Standards themselves, in the order given, as the outline for its report. An alternative is to provide a very clear guide to the location of all content, preceding the self-study narrative.

The accreditation standards — including the Evaluative Standards and those parts of the Curriculum Policy Statement that require program action — guide the substance of the self-study report. The following section is a guide regarding how to discuss each required area of content.

Evaluative Standard 1. Program Rationale and Assessment

- Describe the mission and goals of the social work program. Discuss their consistency with social work's purposes, values, and ethics.
- Relate how program goals reflect content from master's Curriculum Policy Statement M 5.4 to 5.4.5.
- Present the program's objectives, demonstrating their consistency with the mission and goals of the program. Discuss how program objectives reflect the intent of Curriculum Policy Statement M 5.7 to 5.7.14.
- Discuss how the program implements its rationale (mission and goals) throughout the program.
- Discuss how all groups mentioned in the standard are made aware of program goals and objectives, and how program documents present this information. Cite these documents along with the self-study narrative.
- Describe the outcome measures and measurement procedures the program uses in systematic program evaluation, and relate how they are used for program development.
- Document the means through which the program implements systematic self-study and evaluation.
- Discuss actual measurement of achievement of objectives, using findings of the systematic program evaluation undertaken.
- Present evidence of ongoing use of program evaluation results in subsequent program planning and curricular design.

Evaluative Standard 2. Organization, Governance, and Resources

- Describe the governance and administrative structure within which the social work program operates.
- Describe how this organization promotes high-quality professional education and offers sufficient autonomy to support achievement of program goals.
- Discuss how the program maintains autonomy in decision making on program goals, program planning, and goal attainment.
- Provide evidence that the program develops, proposes, defends and manages its own budget.
- Describe how program faculty's authority over program curriculum is maintained.
- Describe how program administration and faculty participate in personnel policy setting and application.
- Demonstrate the sufficiency and appropriateness of secretarial supports which ensure the achievement of program goals. Describe professional and nonprofessional secretarial supports, and computer-based supports assigned to the program, and demonstrate their equivalence to the recommended level of support as specified in the standards.

- Describe the program's physical facilities, including offices, classroom and meeting space, and the nature of the program's control over these spaces. Describe the equipment allocated for staff, faculty, administration, and student use in the program, and relate these resources to program goal attainment. **Insert Form A into the Narrative at this point.**
- Assess the comparability of the organizational status of the social work program to other professional programs in the educational institution (e.g., if other disciplinary education at the graduate level exists in freestanding schools, does social work have the same status?).
- Describe the credentials of the program's chief administrative officer, including education, experience in teaching and educational administration, and in social work practice. Describe the educational degrees the individual holds.
- Describe the responsibilities and authority of the program's chief administrative officer, including a workload description that indicates at least 50% time over the full calendar year for administrative duties in the program. Discuss the sufficiency of this level of release time to fulfill the obligations of the position.
- Use Form B to specify the program's budget for the current academic year and the previous year and include a projection for the next academic year. **Insert Form B into the narrative at this point.** Identify budget allocations for faculty salaries, support services, library and other teaching resources, faculty development, research, travel, operating expenses, and student financial aid.
- Describe the percentage of program funding from the institution and the percentage from sources outside the institution. Document that the overall budget is sufficient to carry out program goals and stable enough to permit program planning by program faculty and administration.
- Describe the adequacy of library holdings, videotapes, and other teaching resources relative to attainment of program goals. **Insert Form C at this point in the narrative.**

Evaluative Standard 3. Nondiscrimination

- Provide evidence that policies and procedures support the organization and implementation of the program without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, or political or sexual orientation.
- Describe the policies, procedures, and actions (institutional and/or programmatic) used by the program to prevent discrimination in the program's operation, and to ensure equity to all participants. Provide evaluative evidence (see Affirmative Action Guidelines on pages 16-18 in the *Handbook*) of the effectiveness of these antidiscrimination policies and procedures.

Evaluative Standard 4. Faculty

- Describe the faculty complement—full-time, part-time, adjunct, visiting, and any other category of faculty members. **Insert Forms D1, D2, and D3 under this narrative heading.**

- Document that the program has sufficient faculty resources and sufficient expertise — defined in terms of educational background, teaching (particularly master's level) and educational administrative experience, and experience in professional practice — to allow the program to achieve its specified goals.
- Describe the full-time equivalent faculty to student ratio achieved in the program (in determining this ratio identify full-time and adjunct/part-time faculty who teach each course), and the ratio of faculty holding doctoral degrees to those holding master's degrees. Describe the prevalence of master's level teaching and administrative experience among program faculty.
- Document how responsibility for providing educational experience is vested in full-time, knowledgeable, experienced faculty, and how part-time or adjunct faculty are used to supplement full-time faculty to provide flexibility and breadth to the program's teaching; and the means through which teaching by these faculty is monitored.
- Document continuity in the assignment of the core of full-time faculty to essential program functions.
- If Form D3 for any faculty who teach the required courses on social work practice (whether full- or part-time) or coordinate field instruction cannot clearly document the holding of an accredited master's degree in social work and (for faculty who have taught required practice courses or coordinated field instruction at the graduate level before enactment of this revised standard, effective March 1994) at least two years of post-degree professional practice experience, the program should apply for an exception to Evaluative Standard 4.2 well before the self-study report is submitted. (See pages 207-211 of this *Handbook*).
- Describe how full-time faculty are assigned responsibilities to carry out their ongoing oversight of the curriculum, and the mechanisms used by faculty for this work.
- Document workload being allocated for all assigned duties as listed in the Evaluative Standard.
- Describe how these faculty responsibilities are allocated, implemented, and evaluated.
- Document the work year for the coordinator of field practicum, and the amount of administrative release time granted over the calendar year for purposes of this assignment.

Evaluative Standard 5. Student Development

- State the admissions policies and procedures of the educational institution and of the program. Describe the program's criteria and procedures for selecting students for the master's program.
- Document that admission of students is limited to candidates who have earned a baccalaureate degree. Document and provide the rationale for any exceptions to this requirement.
- Describe policies and procedures for granting academic credit to students transferring from other accredited and nonaccredited institutions and programs, or to students attempting to qualify for advanced placement. Document that the concerns included in Evaluative Standard 5.2 and Curriculum Policy Statement M5.8 are addressed.

- Document that academic credit for life or previous work experience is not given, and that formal program documents clearly articulate this policy.
- Describe the program's advisement system, referencing the advisement tasks identified in Evaluative Standard 5.5.
- Describe how the advisement system is clearly specified for faculty and students.
- Describe and document program policies and practices regarding student rights and responsibilities. Provide a copy of the statement of student rights and responsibilities that is distributed to students.
- Describe how students are encouraged to form their own organization. Evaluate the effectiveness of the students' organization.
- Describe the mechanisms that permit students to participate in the formulation and modification of policy affecting academic and student affairs and to participate in the program's evaluation.
- Describe the criteria for evaluating student academic and field performance. Provide a copy of the procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work degree program for reasons of academic and nonacademic performance.
- Document how students are advised of grievance and appeal procedures and other institution and program policies. Explain how information about grievance and appeal procedures is made available to all faculty.
- **Include Form EM, providing demographic information on the student population, at the conclusion of this section.**

Evaluative Standard 6. Curriculum

- Describe how all constituencies associated with the program are made aware of the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement (reference Curriculum Policy Statement M1.3).
- Describe the overall organization of the social work curriculum, including both the foundation year curriculum and the advanced practice concentration(s) year curriculum; the curriculum's defining themes; and how all components are integrated. Incorporate content from Curriculum Policy Statement M6.1-M6.3 and 6.20-M6.24 in this discussion.
- Document how all program components provide equal quality of education. Useful information includes program planning information and comparative evaluative data.
- Describe the program's approaches to incorporation of content on social work values and ethics, diversity, promotion of social and economic justice, and populations-at-risk (Curriculum Policy Statement M6.5-M6.8).
- Present the professional foundation areas of human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, and social research. Give attention to incorporating all content included in the respective sections of the Curriculum Policy Statement (Curriculum Policy Statement M6.9-M6.13). Explain plans to strengthen each curriculum area.

- State the program's definitions of foundation and advanced practice, including description of student field practicum at each level. Provide the definition of the liberal arts perspective students are to attain, and relate the definition of foundation and advanced practice to the liberal arts conception in use. Identify the liberal arts prerequisites for given courses and curriculum areas in the social work foundation and advanced concentration curriculum, and other connections between liberal arts, social work foundation and advanced concentration content. Incorporate content from Curriculum Policy Statement M5.9-M5.11 in this discussion.
- Describe the instructional methods used by the program's faculty; identify how these methods reflect the cognitive, affective and experiential components of learning appropriate to attain program goals; and explain how these methods are consistent with the Curriculum Policy Statement.
- Describe the objectives, requirements, and curriculum design of the student field practicum.
- Describe the criteria for selecting agencies for the practicum, for selecting field instructors with appropriate social work credentials, and for evaluating student learning.
- Document how the program sets and implements educationally directed, coordinated field practicum experiences for all students, works with students in planning for and implementing field placements, and monitors and evaluates the field practicum. Incorporate field practicum content from the Curriculum Policy Statement in this discussion (Curriculum Policy Statement M6.14-M6.18). Include the field instruction manual, student performance assessment forms, and other guides to field instructors and students in a subsequent volume of the self-study document.
- Describe the means used by the program to maintain close reciprocal and ongoing relationships with the practice community for purposes of program evaluation and development. Incorporate in this discussion the avenues of renewal required by the Curriculum Policy Statement (Curriculum Policy Statement M7.1-M7.1.4).

Evaluative Standard 7. Alternative Programs

Although the traditional full-time, on-campus program remains the basic structure for baccalaureate and master's degree programs in social work, social work education options have expanded to offer a multiplicity of educational program designs, some of which qualify as alternative programs. These include dual degree programs, collaborative and off-campus arrangements, and distance learning opportunities. The basis for an alternative program may be in design or delivery components relating to geographic location, time factors, curriculum structure and content, instructional methods, governance, or resources (among others).

Although the overall mission and goals may be the same, the student population for whom the program is developed, the curriculum emphasis, or the educational approach may vary to the extent that they constitute substantive changes from the traditional program. Relating these alternative programs and their component parts to the accreditation standards involves interpretation, elaboration, and reporting beyond procedures required for more traditional arrangements. Programs should review Evaluative Standard 7 for a definition and description of alternative programs.

The self-study report should incorporate a full description of any implemented alternative programs that do not constitute substantive changes from the regular program, or that have already been specifically approved by the Commission. Specify any changes in the program and supply findings from the evaluation design that accompanied the original proposal. The description should include:

- A clear rationale for the alternative or collaborative program.
- A full explanation of the curriculum design, and how it is responsive to the mission, goals, and objectives of the program.
- A delineation of the admissions requirements, detailing differences in policy or procedures from those governing the traditional program.
- A description of the support systems available to the program, including library resources, faculty for teaching and advising, professional socialization opportunities for students, physical facilities, and administrative support.
- An evaluation component detailing educational outcomes of the alternative program. The evaluative design should also include a comparison of outcomes with the traditional program.
- Information regarding institutional structure, autonomy, and other significant information relative to the institutional arrangements, if a collaborative arrangement is anticipated, or if another institution's resources are instrumental to the success of the alternative program.
- Programs must demonstrate that the alternative program provides educational quality comparable to that of the traditional program of which it is a part.

A proposal with this information is required from existing or newly proposed programs offering the equivalent of one year or more of course work, which have not been approved by a the Commission. Such a proposal may precede or accompany the self-study report, but should be separate from it.

Alternative programs that are collaborative (e.g., two or more institutions combining to sponsor a single social work degree program) must present additional information, including:

- The structure responsible for providing unified and cohesive administration and coordination of the collaborative program.
- Resources contributed and responsibilities carried by each institution.
- Provision of adequate time for faculty to carry out collaborative aspects of the program, such as additional student advising, inter-institutional and inter-program curriculum planning, policy making, and evaluation of educational outcomes.
- Policies and procedures relating to academic calendars, schedules, cross-registration, admissions, common course syllabi, grading policies, and titles of the degree granted.
- Opportunities and mechanisms for student participation in governance and grievance procedures related to the collaborative program.
- Description of auxiliary support systems—library, physical space, support staff, etc.

Programs are advised to discuss alternative proposals with the Division staff early in the planning stage, since Commission approval must be given before the program begins. Programs must submit four (4) copies of the proposal and other supporting documents.

Evaluative Standard 8. Experimental Programs

Experimental programs do not comply with all accreditation standards, and must receive advance approval from the Commission before implementation.

The self-study document should fully describe all experimental programs offered which have already been specifically approved as experimental programs by the Commission. This description should include:

- Findings related to the evaluation of the outcomes of the experimental program.
- If the program is to continue, a detailed program design and evaluation plan. The plan for evaluation of the proposed experiment should follow accepted protocols of evaluation research. The evaluation plan should be sufficiently detailed to enable the Commission to determine the validity of the evaluation design in relation to the identified issues and objectives and to enable replication by other programs.
- The program should report on how project implementation has been designed to avoid exerting a negative impact on the faculty and other resources and finances of the established program.
- The proposal should show that consideration has been given to possible adverse consequences for the public served or the students involved.

Newly-proposed programs, experimental programs that have not received Commission approval, should provide this same information in a proposal, to the Commission. That proposal may precede or accompany the self-study, but should be separate from the self-study. A proposal for an experimental program to be offered by an accredited program may also be submitted completely apart from the self-study review cycle.

Considerable advance planning is generally required for experimental proposals, and programs are encouraged to consult with DOSA staff early in the process. Programs must submit four (4) copies of the proposal and other supporting documents.

Volume II

The second volume of the self-study report should contain full course syllabi for all social work courses, as well as other courses required for graduation.

Volume III/Additional Volumes

An additional volume (or additional volumes) may be needed to incorporate the program handbook and any other materials used to describe the program to its constituencies (student handbook; field practicum manual; student assessment and program evaluation forms [including student, field instructor, and faculty evaluations of the program, student evaluations of field

instruction, student evaluations of teaching, and evaluations of student performance in field practicum and classroom settings]).

Programs are asked not to submit faculty handbooks, union contracts, or other institutional governance documents not specifically cited as useful to the Commission.